MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

#313 June 2009
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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

DIANE ANASTASIO

- FY FAN-Åh Nej-EP
- SILLA ELÉCTRICA-Hundir-EP
- DE HOJE HAELE-Rovguitar-EP
- DEEP SLEEP-Paranoid Futures-EP
- KVÆRN-Mig-EP
- LIFE-Warning-EP
- HUNX AND HIS PUNX-Hey Rocky/Movin' On-45
- NUCLEAR FAMILY-tape
- MYDOLLS-A World of Her Own-CD
- TUBERCULOSIS/RAYOS X-live

JUSTIN BRIGGS

- FY FAN-Åh Nej-EP
- LIFE-Warning-EP
- CLAYSEA-Slave State-EP
- CRUDE-Attitude-LP
- HÜL-Den Danske Ungdom-LP
- D-CLONE-Drop a Noise Bomb-EP
- Everything sent in this month on Nikt Nic Nie Wie
- SILLA ELÉCTRICA-Hundir-EP
- PIG HEART TRANSPLANT-LP+EP
- MIDDLE AMERICA-Scars-EP

TIM BROOKS

- DUNCAN REDMONDS-Bubble & Squeak-2xLP
- WIPERS-Over the Edge-LP
- CRUDE-Attitude-LP
- HÜL-Den Danske Ungdom-LP
- SOUTHPORT/LEIF ERICSSON-split EP
- CONSTANT STATE OF TERROR-War With No End-EP
- TIME TO ESCAPE-Cost of Living-EP
- STUPIDS-Pass the Suck-EP
- FY FAN-Åh Nej-EP
- DEEP SLEEP-Paranoid Futures-EP

ROBERT COLLINS

- LAUDANUM/STORMCROW-split LP
- PIG HEART TRANSPLANT-LP+EP
- KLINIKA-Karate Pogo-EP
- RATOS DEL VATICANOS-live
- COMPLICITÉ CANDIDE-Rad Potvrzuje Chyba-LP
- HERPES-Komm Vorbei-LP
- CROSS STITCHED EYES-Coranach-LP
- DANIEL JAMES GANG-In This City-EP
- NICE FACE-Mnemonic Device/Situation-45
- SILLA ELÉCTRICA-EP/CLAYSEA-EP

PAUL CURRAN & ARIEL AWESOME

- BRILLIANT COLORS-Highly Evolved-EP
- CROSS STITCHED EYES-Coranach-LP
- FY FAN-Åh Nej-EP
- HÜL-Den Danske Ungdom-LP
- HUNX AND HIS PUNX-Hey Rocky/Movin On-45
- LORD BY FIRE-Three Sisters of the Wolves-EP
- TURBOSLUT-side of split 12"
- RIVR-Life Moves-EP
- SEXY-Por Vida-LP
- SILLA ELÉCTRICA-Hundir-EP

LAYLA GIBBON

- HÜL-Den Danske Ungdom-LP
- SILLA ELÉCTRICA-Hundir-EP
- WIPERS-Over the Edge-LP
- TURBOSLUT-side of split 12"
- MYDOLLS-A World of Her Own-CD
- DEEP SLEEP-Paranoid Futures-EP
- BRILLIANT COLORS-Highly Evolved-EP
- LIBYANS-Crash Course/Erased-45
- FLYIN' TRICHECOS-EP/MIDDLE AMERICA-EP
- MAYFAIR SET-Already Warm/Desert Fun-45

BOB GOLDIE

- WHITE WIRES-LP
- SEDATIVES-Cannot Calm Down-EP
- LOST BOYS-Tuta Blu-EP
- POISON ARROWS-Sticky Situations-EP
- PSYCHED TO DIE-Sterile Walls-EP
- TIME TO ESCAPE-Cost of Living-EP
- THE GIRLS-Transfer Station/Elephant Tricks-45
- DEEP SLEEP-Paranoid Futures-EP
- THE SODS-Recordings '78-'79-LP
- AVERSIONS-Ex Nihilo Nihil-LP

KENNY KAOS

- HOWIE AND THE HOT KNIVES-45
- THE FLIPS-That Girl Stacy-EP
- LOS STEAKS-Orange Fish-EP
- FLYING OVER-Are You a Punk?-EP
- THE GIRLS-Transfer Station/Elephant Tricks-45
- PLEXI 3-Time Box/What Love is For-45
- POISON ARROWS-Sticky Situations-EP
- NECKTIES-Skating With a Boner
- BEAVERS-Silly Girls-EP
- BEAT BEAT-Without Choo-EP

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

CAROLYN KEDDY

- DIPLOMATS/SUN RARARA-split EP
- THE OH SEES-HELP-CD
- MUSLIMS-LP
- PERSONAL AND THE PIZZAS/BOBBY UBANGI-split EP
- FLYIN' TRICHECOS-Tri-Tri-Trichecho-EP
- ONNA-EP
- THE FLIPS-EP/ROMANTIC ROBOTS-Blues-EP
- PINK REASON-45/BRILLIANT COLORS-EP
- MONKS-Transatlantic Feedback DVD
- HOMOSEXUALS/GRANT HART/EAT SKULL-live

RAY LUJAN

- DUNCAN REDMONDS-Bubble & Squeak-2xLP
- PINK REASON-Borrowed Time-EP
- POISON ARROWS-Sticky Situations-EP
- GET BENT-Sleeping Bag-EP
- THE GIRLS-Transfer Station/Elephant Tricks-45
- COPYRIGHTS-Dead Flowers/Carmelita-45
- DOPAMINES-Soap-EP
- FAITHLESS SAINTS-CD/DIRTY BLVD-CD
- FLIPS-EP/CHEAP GIRLS-EP
- HOMOSEXUALS-Live/DEATH IN THE FAMILY-live

MARK MURRMANN

- TIMMY'S ORGANISM-Squeeze the Giant-2xEP
- SILLA ELÉCTRICA-Hundir-EP
- BUNDLE OF FAGS-Art School Asshole/Attitude-45
- THE SODS-Recordings '78-'79-LP
- DEAD GHOSTS-Bad Vibes/May Day-45
- POISON ARROWS-Sticky Situations-EP
- BEAT BEAT-Without Choo-EP
- FLYIN' TRICHECOS-Tri-Tri-Trichecho-EP
- FRESH MEAT-Problem Fixer-EP
- EBONICS-EP/THE JONESES-2xLP

BRUCE ROEHRS

ON THE ROAD WITH THE CONFEDERACY OF SCUM

FRED SCHRUNK

- SEXY-Por Vida-LP
- RIVR-Life Moves-EP
- SILLA ELÉCTRICA-Hundir-EP
- ADD/C-Keepin' It Real-LP
- WIPERS-Over the Edge-LP
- STUPID PARTY-LP
- MEAN JEANS-License to Chill-EP
- DEEP SLEEP-Paranoid Futures-EP
- EBONICS-Rock'n'Roll-EP
- FY FAN-Åh Nej-EP

CISSIE SCURLOCK

- NUKKEHAMMER-tape
- D-CLONE-Drop a Noise Bomb-EP
- FY FAN-Åh Nej-EP
- SILLA ELÉCTRICA-Hundir-EP
- V/A-Does it Hurt?-LP
- ANTIDOTUM-Testowane Na Ludziach-LP
- LAPINPOLTHAJAT-Kokoomus-EP
- TIMMY'S ORGANISM-Squeeze the Giant-2xEP
- BRILLIANT COLORS-EP / TIME TO ESCAPE-EP
- CRUDE-Attitude-LP/HÜL-Den Danske Ungdom-LP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

- TIME TO ESCAPE-Cost of Living-EP
- ABBADON-Godzina Krzywd-LP
- V/A-Does it Hurt?-LP
- ANTIDOTUM-Testowane Na Ludziach-LP
- LAPINPOLTHAJAT-Kokoomus-EP
- D-CLONE-Drop a Noise Bomb-EP
- DEEP SLEEP-Paranoid Futures-EP
- FY FAN-Åh Nej-EP
- KHATARINA-Little Girls Never Say No-EP
- SILLA ELÉCTRICA-Hundir-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

- *Distort #19*
- *Mosh #11*
- *Punk//Pink//Ponk #3*
- *D90 #1*
- *Jerk Store*
- *What's the Jam #4*
- *Run With Scissors #2*
- *Pigeon Breath #1*
- *Not Very Nice #5*
- *Gullible #29*

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11, Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine , Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microçosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September'05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oil!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scène reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, *Trust* fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Part One, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (*Avow* zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Part Two, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, *We're Gonna Fight* zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. *MRR* 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?. The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kyklooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#307/December '08. SOLD OUT!!! Sorry...

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas,Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmstrom (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

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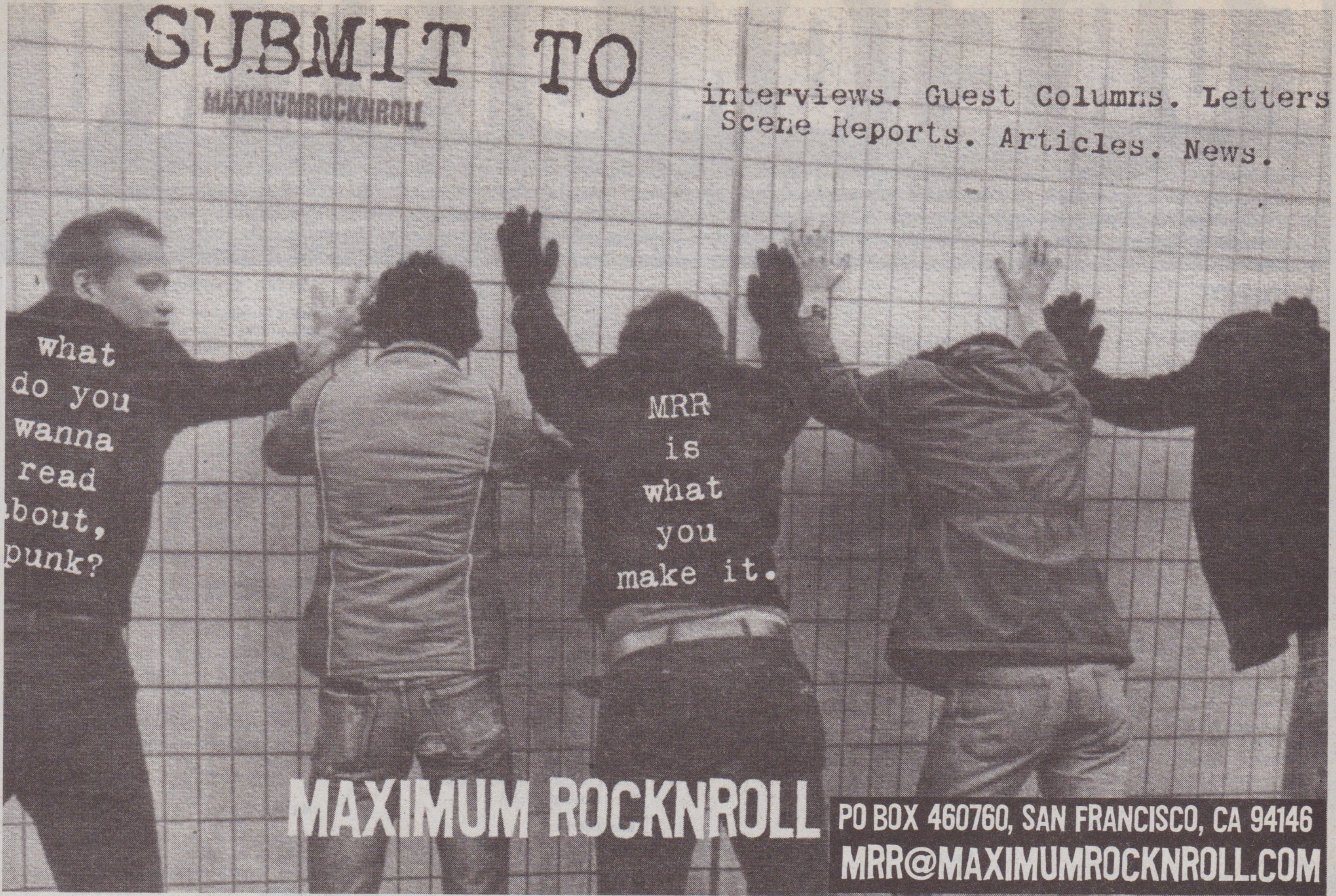

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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Dear Maximum Rocknroll—

My name is Justin. I'm currently locked down in Florida for some absurd bullshit that kind of snowballed, and I ended up getting screwed by this wonderfully unjust/money hungry judicial system. Anyway, I am writing to tell you a little about myself and hopefully get some friends/penpals.

I am 27 year old die hard skate punk from way back. I have been obsessed with loud fast rock'n'roll and punk for 13 years, and skating going on 20 years. Back in 2001 I hitchhiked / train-hopped from Florida out to California (love the fuckin' Bay Area) to chase my childhood skate dreams. But seeing as how no matter where I was, I was still me, I got caught up in the whole squatter/train wreck drunk punk and all it's glory and ended up having some sort of alcohol/heat induced stroke at the city bus station in Santa Cruz. Shortly thereafter I decided to head back east, defeated, before I drank myself to death.

I had a blast and wish I had never come back. Believe me, being drunk in the gutter is way better than having your freedom taken away from you. Anyways, I have matured somewhat through this shitty situation, going on eight years now, and finally figured out what I want to do with myself, my life, and my future. My plans are top get out, come back out to the East Bay, get involved in both the skate and DIY punk scenes and eventually open up my own skate/punk independent rock-'n'roll shop. The main purpose being to bring more strength, independence, unity and progression into both communities.

I want to give something back to the two things that have given me so much, skating and punk rock by putting on skate demos and contests, promoting and putting on punk shows and giving people who are passionate about these two cultures something to feel proud of and somewhere to go. I want to call it either, "Skates and Crates" as in crates of records, or "Wild in the Streets."

For the past two and a half years or so I have been writing letters like this to different skate companies and punk record labels, zines and distros trying to get as much support from out there to help me get through this shitty situation and into my future endeavors. I have gotten some good responses and made some friends, but I'm still at it as you can see. I need as many friends, pen pals, contacts and connections as I can possibly get while I'm stuck in here. Mail is one of the few things to look forward to in here, and whenever I get a letter, zine or photos in response to one of my letters it is highly appreciated.

I also write lyrics and hope to get a band together once this shit is over.

The health issue (#310) was one of the best I've read. Thanks everyone for making the mag work, I appreciate it. Hope to hear back from someone, please print this along with my address.

Justin M. Curtis #K62605
Apalachee Correctional Institution
East Unit
35 Apalachee Drive
Sneads, FL 32460

Justin—

Thanks for writing, it sounds like you are making the best of a shitty time. Your store idea sounds awesome, but I almost feel like you should start it somewhere else that needs a community resource like that. The Bay Area is a great place to live, far be it me who discourages anyone from moving here, but I think the best thing about punk and skateboarding, the thing that makes them so appealing and fun is that anyone can do either activity anywhere with minimal resources. San Francisco/the Bay has long been a skate and punk Mecca, and as a result there are rad secret under-highway skate parks, all sorts of show spaces. I don't know exactly what I am getting at here, but I wish kids/human beings would try and transform the towns they grew up in/ended up at rather than moving to their punk rock dream town. But that sounds so lame–like I said I wouldn't want to discourage you from moving here, with such an exciting plan. I guess it's more people that move places and expect the action to be happening, when to me at least, the whole point of punk and skating is making your own kicks, not requiring someone else to provide the entertainment. Anyway, good luck and stay strong Justin.
—Layla

Layla—

Just read your column in latest *MRR* and I may have a spare copy of *Femzine* # 2 somewhere if you need it. I was in one of the bands interviewed (Decadent Few). Dena was, if I remember, Canadian. There were two issues, her boyfriend, Keith, did a great mag called *Suicide? No Murder*, which mainly covered USHC. They also did a little record stall up Portobello Market on Saturdays, real nice people. This was in 1984, a couple of years later they (together) did another zine, which covered stuff like the Cramps, Fuzztones etc. I also have all the issues of *JOLT* if you ever wanna scan of em. Others of interest to you, in that they were edited by girls:

Moreon (early 1977-2 girls who shared squat w/the Slits. One of them, a photographer, is in that Don Letts punk movie)
Apathy In Ilford (late 1976, one issue)
Fishnet Stockings (ditto)
Secret Public (one-off by Linder, later of Ludus, and Jon Savage)
Hanging Around (Scotland, co-editor)
Fanzine Of Noise (1980, Co-editor was Lou, later of Flux OPI)
My Wimp/The Cynik (1979-3 issues, changed it's name each one, can't remember name of the 3rd)
Shoot (done by the girl bassist of State Hate)
Short Circuit (1978)
Tidal Wave (1980, post punk/Joy Division)
Fourth Edition (Newcastle, mid '80s)
Alternative Sex (1983 1 issue, collaboration between a dozen punk women)

…which doubtless makes me sound a bit nerdish on all this, just amazed someone else still cares. I should imagine there were many more. Just read your blog too and you're right, London doesn't exist anymore, it's a figment in the imagination of some sleek property developer. Actually there is nostalgia around for the old '70s/'80s London of beige-everything and nicotine-stained sepia. You're right, it was seedy, horrible and grim, which is pre-

cisely we tried to create something more colorful or, if not, simply wreck what was there. What we have now is bland homogeneity, which in itself has engendered mediocrity, but there ya go, things change. Anyway, due to a move, everything is in storage right now but I can dig out if need be,
—Mike, London

Mike—
This is so cool–I know I have complained about the epic mass of coffee table books about punk and it's surrounding ephemera, but it would be amazing to see some of these zines preserved in that format! Or I guess someone could make a webpage of PDFs of old zines, which would probably be more in the spirit of zine culture anyway. We did the zine/print media special issue to encourage people to make their own fanzines, to get off the internet for a second and get Rank/Xeroxed, to see what other people have done and to make their own better version...
—Layla

[redacted]

Dear MRR Crew—
Hey I know I just wrote, but I'm bored and braindead. ("Trapped in isolation / steelcase enclosure." Crucifix) I still like punk but good bands are feew and far between–in the words on an old Pistols album it's like *Flogging a Dead Horse*, that's what punk has become. It's still in my blood, hell it's in my DNA and alwqys will be but how many times can you rehash "Anarchy in the UK," "Blitzkrieg Bop," "Ever Fallen in Love," "No Values" and still be relevant?

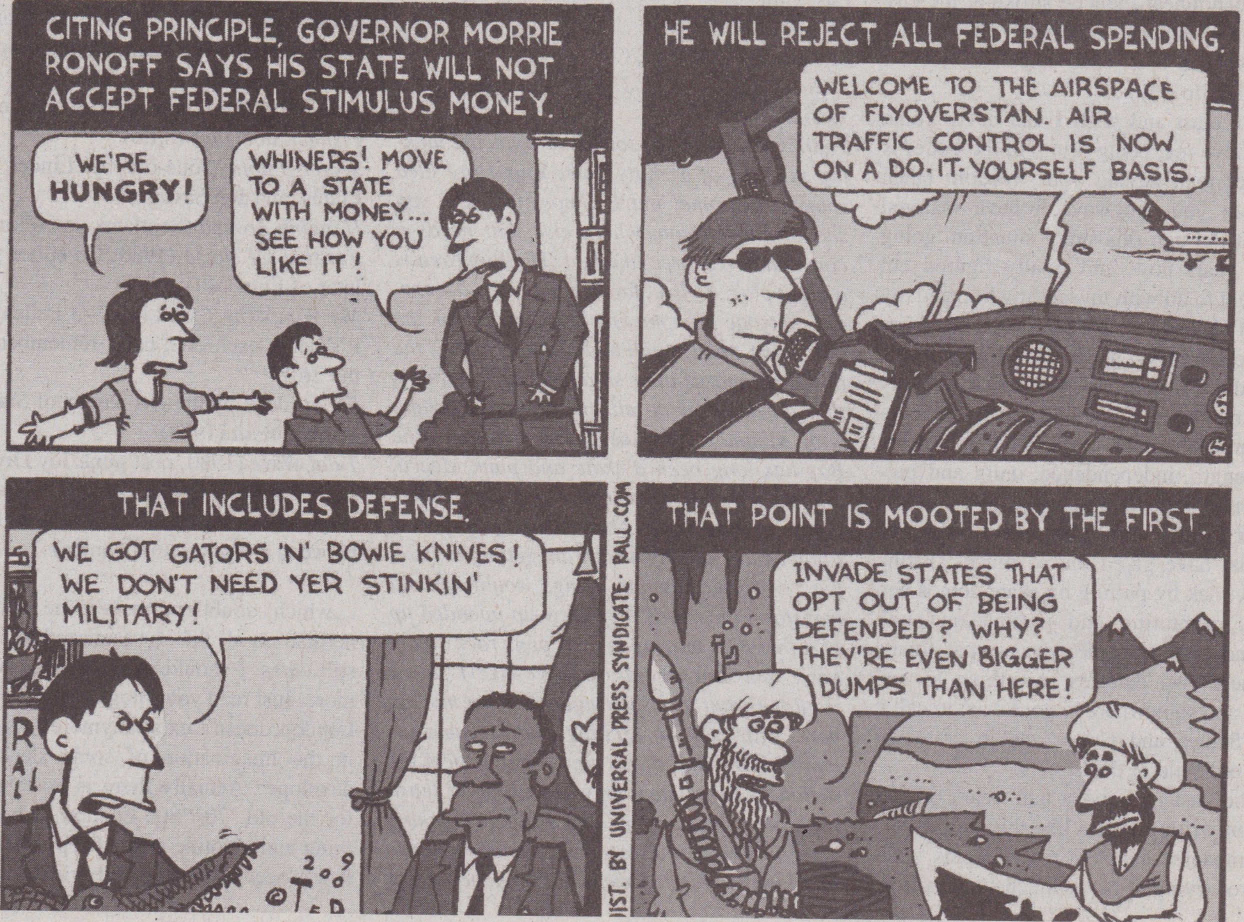
Right now the only good thing that could come out of punk rock 2009 would be the Dead Kennedies getting back together to do an international tour with Minor Threat opening for 'em. Think about that, instead of second rate imposters clogging the airwaves, let the founding fathers show us starving upright citizens the promised land one more time.

Tell Jello to put on his Shriner's fez and summon Frankenchrist and let the real warped tour begin. The Pistols did it, Cock Sparrer did it and Condemned 84 continue to carry the Oi! Torch, Discharge and Broken Bones are doing it on the D-Beat end. I'm sure if anyone knows, you guys do that every other genre in existence is spewing their cheez-whiz versions of punk rock near and far. I'm one to talk I know, I'm rotting in a cell accomplishing absolute zero. I'm sitting here like a mummy in a cell listening to Demented Are Go "Hellbilly Storm" and turns our Charley Harper plays harp on this, pretty fuckin' cool.

Reading the new issue (#309) today I finally clicked to the conspicuous cover I received, pretty fuckin' covert and cool of y'all.
Love and hate
Derek Bryson #J-03365
c-2-113 SAC/New Folsom
PO Box 290066
Represa, CA 95671

Man, if Jello in a Shriner fez is what's gonna take us to the promised land, I stand secure in my convictions that even if such a place existed, I do not wanna go there. How about the old men shut up for a while and let the young, exciting and actually musically adventurous DIY underground have its say? Bands that don't need radio airplay to validate their existence, and kids that aren't gonna be dull smug talking heads on some documentary about something that happened to them when they were in their teens and twenties, that they are still reaping cultural capital from. BORING BORING BORING!

I am psyched you got the special prisoner cover we did for #309, the February '09 issue. We were worried about the cover art stopping it from getting to our prisoner subscribers so we made a disguise!
—Layla



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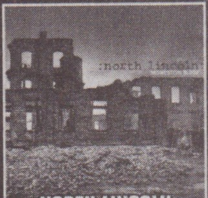

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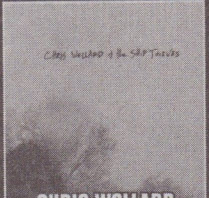

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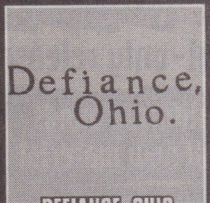

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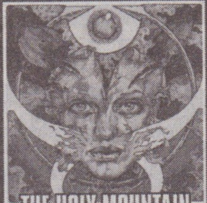

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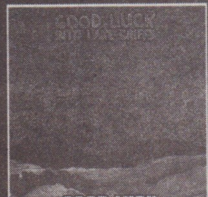

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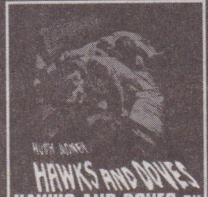

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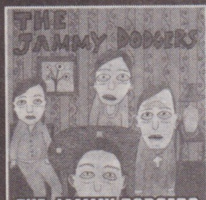

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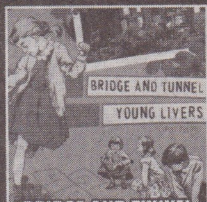

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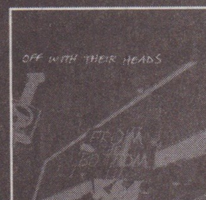

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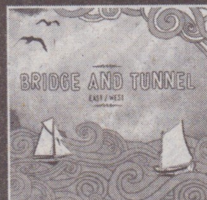

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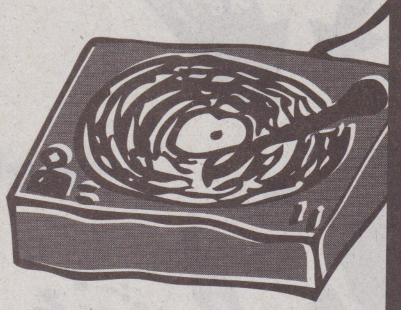

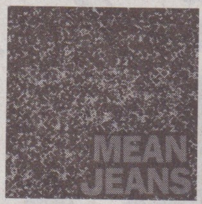

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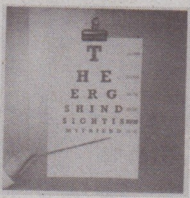

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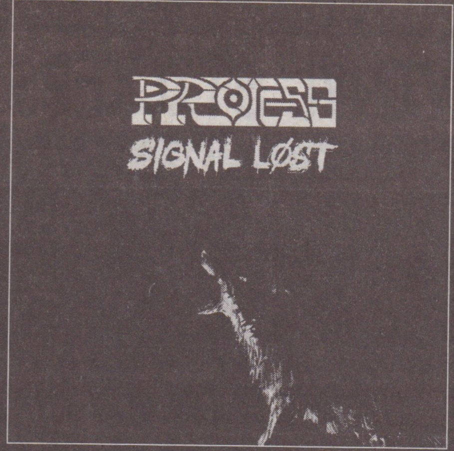

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FUCK YOU

COLUMNS

ALL FOREIGN JUNK

A nice month for foreign junk: Exotic sounds from the fringes, you could state in a mocking tone. I'd like to feature more Albanian noise rock and Egyptian powerviolence, but I'm not digging hard enough.

Thanks to Spanish band COPROLITOS for sending me their 7". I'm inundated with hardcore CDRs since this column kicked off, both for *Distort* zine and my *MRR* ramblings, so after sorting through those bills I can get to this nice fuckin' cheque.

COPROLITOS plays great '70s-styled punk shit with some obnoxious drooling on vocals in that delightfully musical language. I could listen to Spanish people talk all day. There's something so soothing about the way they speak. The vocalist could be singing about puppy dog butterfly cloud fairy floss or how she's just got period cramps and it'd sound equally delicious to my ears, battered by the sharp-edged tones of the Australian tongue. If you want a musical reference to this 7", which is released on a label with the questionable name Blondes Must Die Records, I'd say put on any KBD record and imagine a pissed off Spanish gal yelling at you over the top.

Finnish hardcore is all right with me, so LAPINPOLTHAJAT is also to be applauded for taking the effort to make me aware that their new 7" exists. It's not as brutally fast and thrash-y as other recent Finnish records that have been kicking my ass, retaining some punk sensibilities to the guitarwork, etc. I appreciate the gesture, being tired of hearing thrash that has no r'n'r sensibilities. Fuckin' cool shit here, keep an eye out.

Melbourne's CHROME DOME wish they were born in the '60s so they could have spent their teen years kicking around NY with SUICIDE and then headed out to drug-out with the San Fran punk scene, soaking up acid with the synth freaks and buzzing out with the speed punks. Their new cassette (7" and CDR also available) is titled *Negative Vibes,* and sounds like that SCREAMERS, NERVOUS GENDER with SUICIDE dark synth punk shit that makes a good soundtrack to public transport or anywhere crowded and hostile. Great shit, highly recommended to new wave cunts.

Another new Melbourne release comes from SUPER WILD HORSES, who sound like if BIKINI KILL only wrote those sensual Olympian slacker hazy tunes with Tobi on vocals, and tried to cover RONETTES tunes at the same time. It's a kinda stupid reference that only rock crit. / nerds would bother thinking up or arguing with, so there's a great deal of self loathing that goes into penning this column today. I like this record a lot. The drum sound is blown out and cavernous, and the tone is very aggressive and '60s punk, but when you listen closely, the songs are tied way more into mellow indie rock.

This is exactly how songs like this need to be recorded: distorted and raw. You need to involve yourself to understand it, and the hooks dig deeper because you pushed them in yourself. I just realised something slightly worse than my overly obtuse comparison: They'll probably get a lot of comparisons to bands like the VIVIAN GIRLS because they all have fallopian tubes and people are generally lazier than me. I'd urge you to dig deeper than the aforementioned hype and gloss of the internet nerd. Lay down with this delicately presented record—one of the best of the year so far.

SUPER WILD HORSES also has a song on the new *World's Lousy With Ideas* Vol. 7. I've been a huge fan of these compilations, which feature some of the more interesting US bands of the last couple years, so it was nice to see the Aarght Records dudes from Melbourne put a volume together. Featuring "SWH" (another great song, same recording session as the 7") and "UV Race" (I feel like a cunt even writing this, as I drum for this band—but it's a great song that I'm proud to have recorded—the first take of a song we decided to demo, bravely edited and cleaned up by Mikey) on the A side, and on "Straight Arrows" on the flip (this song is the best recorded by the band so far, retaining the fuzz guitar but shedding the garage meets power pop sound and leaning in a more psych-tinged, unconventional direction that this author salutes) and EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING (heard of 'em?!). One thing I like about this compilation is all bands are hanging with repetition like THE FALL just toured through town, and the sound is timeless, or at least so much that some Bloodstains in 2038 is gonna grab one of these tunes and put it aside a band like the UPSETS and it'll all sound contemporary.

If you play music with a bit of grit and rawness to it, or if you write a fanzine that loosely covers the same sonic territory, and you *don't* live in the US, Japan or Sweden, get in touch. My address is DANIEL STEWART: PO BOX 239 NORTH CARLTON VICTORIA 3054 AUSTRALIA. If you'd like to email me, try distorttheworld@gmail.com.

I've been on time with rent twice since I've lived in the Bay Area: Once in 2004, and one other time that I can't recall but I know isn't imaginary. It is by the divine grace of a couple of landlords that I live in this groovy town. Some people have made moral attacks on my character because I was a boozer and a whoremonger, and subsequently that's why I was broke. Bullshit! If you're devoted enough to any addiction you can cut corners and get fucked up. Duh. I was broke cause I was born that way.

Money money money… I've had so many frustrating experiences with it. You live in SF and do the roommate shuffle thing, your gonna live with a couple rich kids—not that that's bad. Some of them will wanna share hella coke with you, but then there are those certain *motherfuckers*. I'm (slighty) *bitter* about certain aspects of life, and I'm certain this condition will deepen the longer I live.

One aspect is living with kids whose parents you *know* have way more money than

yours and you *know* that's the only real reason they survive—yet *still* they tell you *whack shit.* This one girl who made more money than me got all high and bitchy with me cause I asked my mom for money one time. "Have fun with you mother's money," she said (our apartment was full of toys her dad got her). Then she went on some trip about how she's an "adult" and would *never* ask her "poor" father or mother for money. Spare me, *bitch.*

My parents are working-class and I scam those broke motherfuckers for money every chance I get. (I mean, if my parents brought me into this *bullshit* world, the *least* they can do is loan a bitch some duckets here and there, shit. The lesson here: Use a rubber or you'll be paying for it the rest of your life.)

A less frustrating situation was when a dear friend, who also makes more money than me, gave me a pair of Marc Jacobs vans he didn't wear anymore. We get into a fight about money, I bring up that he has more than me, he brings up the fact *at least* he's not an asshole about it—cause he gave me his designer shoes. Was I not being grateful enough? Did I even have to be grateful at all? A $100 pair of shoes can easily become $20 secondhand.

What were we fighting about? It's shit like this, where I don't think either one of us acted incorrectly, but it's just what can come up when money's involved. I hate the players. I hate the game. But of course I'm not going to wake up and have a million dollars tommorow, or the day after that. Adding *yet* another shitty eight-dollar-an-hour job (the only kind I can seem to get with regularity with my school schedule) will not save me. I'll cross my finger and widdle by.

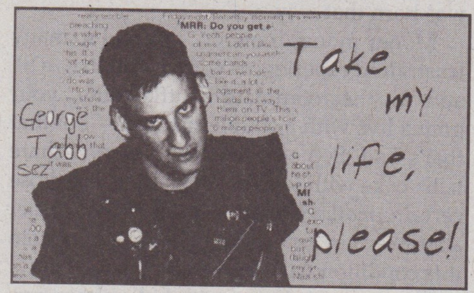
You can pretend to be OK with something, or you can scream to the rooftops about it. There are times when neither method will change the outcome. Sometimes I cry to the Goddess about it. I'm young, poor, Black, angry, and lazy as *fuck*. How will I make it? Two ways:

a) Cross my fucking fingers, and

b) Hold on to the belief that I WILL TOTALLY FUCKING WIN.

Love,

Brontez



After the events of 9/11—when our apartment in New York City's fabulous Tribeca turned from what you'd see in a glossy magazine into what you'd see on Al Jezzera—we eventually decided to move out west. About 3,000 miles or so west.

No more below-freezing winters or densely humid summer days with the too-common stench of urine and garbage lining the streets. No more cramming into a packed subway car filled with coughing and sneezing riders.

With only a handful of belongings that weren't toxic enough to merit a trip to the Staten Island dump, my wife, She-Who-Will-Not-Be Named, and I, along with our dog-child, Scooter, moved to this place you locals in Phoenix call home. This was 2003.

So, all we needed was a place to live. Luckily, my mother-in-law, Maria Dawson, is a local, well-connected interior designer, and it was with her help, and that of fate, that we were able to become first-time homeowners, snagging an awesome patio home built in 1961. When I say patio home, I mean multi-patio home. There is a patio off of every room in the house. Coming from the vertical living of NYC, where your only connection to the outside is a window with steel bars over it, this was pure luxury.

I love our new digs. It's very retro looking, and with its open layout, feels much like a NYC loft. My favorite room in the house is the laundry room. Imagine that! No more trips in a crowded elevator to the shared laundry room with the quarter-swallowing machines and the creepy panty-stealing resident. I?ve got tons of living space, private outside areas, two full bathrooms, and lots of storage space. Now, just gimme a La-Z-Boy, a large TV to hook up my video game consoles to and I can retire!

With what little items we still owned, we basically had to start from scratch—and on a very tight budget. We needed everything. A bed. A kitchen table. Towels. Dishes. Everything.

***

So in comes Maria Dawson to our rescue. At this point, I was hands-off. I had completely relinquished all decision-making to my wife and my mother-in-law. I didn?t want to be involved. Shopping for furniture, dishes, linens, etc. was my idea of hell.

On my mother-in-law's fine list of things to do to our home—in order to modify it from an 80-something-year-old-man's home into a nice young couple's—was the floors.

When we first saw our new house, when it wasn't yet ours, it was covered with worn-out wall-to-wall carpeting. And silly tiles in the kitchen that made the place more Trailer Park than Central Park.

So away it all went.

Maria had these big-looking guys take it all away, and underneath, we found a really wonderful concrete floor. But, of course, it was covered with glue, stains of all kinds, and had holes and cracks throughout. It sort of looked like the walls of the Emerald Lounge, my favorite local watering hole. I kinda liked it, but I knew it couldn't remain as is. So in came the floor fixers Maria hired.

After a couple weeks of stripping, sanding, digging, filling, and actually making quite a lovely mess, we ended up with floors clean and beautiful enough to eat off of. In fact, not only does Scooter enjoy his Kibbles & Bits from the shiny surface, if I drop something I'm cooking or eating, the three-second rule extends to 30. Another wonder of the new floors is that they keep so cool—especially during the months it gets really hot here. Actually, "hot" isn?t a word that best describes the weather here during the summer. "Inferno" may be more accurate. Yet, while it's reign in hell outside, it's joe cool indoors. And who needs the outside world, really, when you own a 32-inch flat screen television. As it turns out, I do.

***

The day our new couch arrived, I started to get that sinking feeling in my gut. I should have felt it earlier, when my mother-in-law replaced the 40-something-year-old toilets in our abode with new modern ones made by a company called "Toto." Isn?t that a dog?s name? Also, the only people using these "Totos" were She-Who-Will-Not-Be Named and myself. Not Scooter—our nine pound Yorkshire Terrier. So what was with this dog motif?

***

There is nothing wrong with these toilets, which she paid for from her own pocket. Please don?t get me wrong. In fact, these porcelain wonders are quite amazing. The seats close really slowly—no matter how hard you try to slam them down—but somehow, urine still manages to wet the toilet seat. So much for modern science. The first day the new couch arrives, I grab a bag of chips and ready myself for a comfy afternoon of downing a few Fosters, a fine Australian lager, and checking out the latest issue of *Maxim*, a fine American staple in the heads of today's youth. As I look for the copy with Carmen Electra on the cover, I can?t seem to find it. On our retro coffee table, near our new brown leather couch, are some new periodicals, like *Desert Living, Dwell, Interview* and *Penthouse*. It was like being at a highbrow dentist's office. I sit on the couch, pop open a beer,

flip open *Wallpaper* and check out some nice flats in England, where it seems they spend more money on their apartments then on their teeth.

***

That?s when the yelling starts. "That couch is for guests!" She-Who-Will-Not-Be Named and her mom try to explain to me through their over excited voices. "Please go sit on the other couch in the family room."

Confused, I ask one simple question: "Isn?t this the *living* room?" My answer comes in the form of an exile to the upholstered couch in the family room.

Forever.

But all is not lost, as Scooter has claimed the leather couch as his. The brown leather wonder has now become the first $3,000 doggie bed I?ve ever seen.

Decent bragging rights, I'll say.

***

While my television has remained in my modern day museum home, its placement therein is a source of contention among the decision-makers who run this house. And I, as the dominant male of these premises, of course, have no say.

Nor do I really wish to have one.

So far, She-Who-Will-Not-Be-Named and her mom have done great with the 1960s-style shag carpeting throw rugs. All three of them. The first one was switched from a brown, to a darker brown, which was ultimately replaced with a mixture of gray, brown and taupe shag. And all our dishes match nicely, until they are returned for others, which also match. Then there?s the bedroom furniture that almost remains a constant.

Something my dog and I really appreciate.

And, of course, those fine touches like baskets in the restrooms for guests, hand towels for everyone, and a huge cactus in the living room to remind us daily that we aren't in Kansas, anymore. Even though our toilets are named Toto.

Epilogue:

In 2005, I realized, through a series of tragic events, that I *purchased* those fucking toilets: not only that, I purchased everything as part of a scam She-Who-Will-Not-Be-Named and her mother and stepfather ran on me. While I was in the hospital out in Phoenix, near death, everything started to fall apart. When I got out and began to recover, I ended up going bankrupt, checked into a mental institution and found out my ex-wife and her family had grifted me for my credit and everything I own, and got forcibly divorced.

I am still very sick to this day from the crap in the dust from 9/11. But I do have Scooter, and she does have around a quarter of a million dollars that is half mine. Who won? Me.

Scooter is nothing less than a gift from God, and what comes around goes around.

I really did love Phoenix and my friends there, and I miss you all.

Shit happens.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. Mike Watt and Dave Thomas have a new band called Unknown Instructors, and their new album, *Funland*, is now out on Smog Veil. It's noisy and reminds of me Gang Of Four meets Pierre Ubu. Good stuff. If you like noise, this is good noise. Also out is *Rock & Roll Ronin*, from my new favorite band, Jukebox Zeros. They even do a song called "Surfing Armageddon." I know I heard that title somewhere before…these guys rock and are the nicest bad-asses I've ever known!

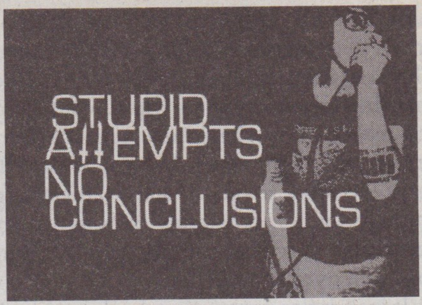
2. The Dwarves' *Fuck You Up And Get Live* DVD is the best DVD since the Dead Boys one from CBGBs. Period. It's the band, live at Continental here in New York City, kicking ass and taking names. The music blasts nonstop with Blag only saying "Yeah" a lot between songs. This is so fucking good you must own it. The Dwarves keep proving they are the only true great punk band still together from the early days of hardcore. You go, Blag.

3. *Grand Theft Auto: Chinatown Wars* is a game for the Nintendo DS that Eric Cartman from *South Park* tells everyone to get. What are you waiting for? Best game, next to *Zelda*, for the DS. Run! Also fun is *Trivial Pursuit* from EA, for the Sexbox360. Great for parties or by yourself! My gal Jill can kick my ass in this, but she?s too busy playing *Top Spin 3* from 2k for the Sexbox as well. It?s the best tennis game, ever. Well, until the new Sega *Virtua Tennis* hits around May.

Madworld, for the Nintendo Wii, is the only good game for the whole system. "Good" as in for sick and twisted adults like me. Taking a guy and shoving an iron pole up his ass until it comes out his mouth is awesome! Not for kids. Also, *Docomodake*, for the DS, from Ignition, rules. You play as a mushroom—you know, a fun guy. Doh! Anyway, great puzzles, and if you finish the last four maps let me know. I need your help!

Just got *The Godfather 2* for the Sexbox69 too! Haven?t played it yet—but it looks like a nice version of *Liberty City* meets *Vice City*. We'll see…Ya know, I keep trying to stop playing video games, but they keep dragging me back in!

4. www.georgetabb.com



Dear international punk and hardcore community,

Well, here I am, still in Newfoundland and becoming obsessed with ice pans—an obsession that started after I heard this awesome and pleading "Please Talk to your Kids about Ice Pans" public service announcement. I guess each year when these broken-off bits of icebergs drift past the coast of Newfoundland, local youth jump on them for kicks, leading to a few annual helicopter rescues or deaths by cold, cold drowning.

I tried to go see the ice pans last week, despite the fact that I was so tired I'd get head rushes from turning my head. Strings of graveyard shifts. I cannot pull that shit off. On evening three, after a day of failed napping, standing over a stove and preparing a pot of espresso seemed too much. So I hopped on my bike and coasted downhill toward the harbor and just paid some smiley 20-year-old in all black at one of those extremely lame nouveau rich-fancy fair trade establishments to make one for me instead.

Sure, in theory I support the move toward an all-organic food industry, but in a place wherein the term "organic" has no regulation at all, it's just an aesthetic—some cheesy St. John-ers with eBay-bought Prada and fake mainland accents buying twenty-dollar appetizer sampler plates. I ordered that double espresso to go. Yes. Let's burn this fucker down one non-sustainable cup at a time.

Anyway, the coffee did nothing but turn my stomach some more and I went around by the harbor and couldn't see anything around the fishing boats, so I forced myself up the stairs of a parking garage, six floors up—about half the height of the tallest building in town. I tried to see out, but it was getting too dark, maybe, or they'd passed through the harbor and were gone by now, but anyway, I couldn't see much. Nothing I could possibly jump on, at least.

Not like the ice pans I saw on the news that night, watching TV at work: ice pans were so thick in some parts. Ferries were marooned. Featured was the Bell Island ferry and a group of people trying to get back into St. John's. They'd flown in for a

funeral from all the usual ex-expatriate spots: the Alberta oil fields, Qatar, Nunavut. The denseness of the ice pans was so thick that the ferry delayed its trip to wait for an icebreaker—but when the icebreaker didn't arrive and flight times loomed closer, the ferry decided to go it alone and trudge through the ice, constantly backing up and rerouting, a twenty-minute trip dragging into well over an hour.

It just defies conventional seasonal logic, you know? Like, I see an ocean full of ice that thick and I'm like, fuck. That is fucking cold, man. But here, it's just a usual occurrence, symptomatic of warmer weather, see, because the icebergs a little north are breaking off and drifting southbound. Ice pans and glacier-thick water means summer is a-comin'.

"Are you upset about the delay?" the funeral-goers were asked.

"Oh, heck, no. Newfoundland, ice comes with the territory," with a calm casualness, a genuine indifference to the Armageddon-like conditions.

Just like my landlord says when I hand him my rent late because I've been stuck at my home care job for an extra day (yes, in my new life, blizzards sometimes lead to my working for a straight 24 hours). Anyway, he responds in pure small talk demeanor, "Well, no one said it would be easy, b'y," which is a funny thing to say to someone when taking their rent money. Oh well. By international standards, this apartment is underpriced.

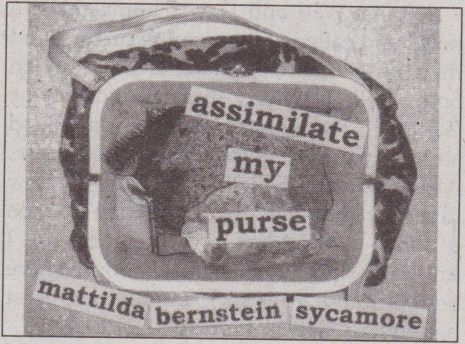
I go upstairs and listen to my floor stereo unit with a broken record player that I got for free out of the *Buy & Sell* magazine. I listen to cassettes on it by connecting my Walkman to it with a Y-cord via the aux inputs on the back. My old best friend/roommate circa early-'00s just sent me a mixtape. I always forget she's not 17 anymore, until she sends me a mix tape that's all "Burn out" by GREEN DAY and that Bruce Springsteen song waxing nostalgia about teenage sex.

Anyway, last week my new band played someone's 20th birthday party in their mom's basement. Awkward occasion. Anyone who repeats that Greg Ginn via Henry Rollins quote about playing the fuck out of a show despite there being only five people in attendance maybe never played a show to said amount of people while an equal amount of college girls stood in the adjoining kitchen, smiling politely and drinking Big-8 brand lemon-lime sodas, waiting for it to all to end. I'm wishing I were still in the study watching youtube videos of juggalos.

Everyone said that every year prior to this—the 17th, 18th and 19th birthday parties—was bumping. Something else I missed. I'm hoping the raging punk heyday of this place isn't over. I don't want to move somewhere cliché'-punk because I want to be 25 and enjoy a sweaty and insane house show with my peers. I'm looking for something to jump on here.

Hopefully, next month, my column will be punker.

xo juls generic



Lostmissing: A Public Art Project—Part three

Remember this project? A reminder: You know when you have a friend who you think will always be there—no matter what, at least you'll have that friendship, right? Lostmissing is a public art project about the loss of that relationship, a specific relationship for me—right now it's missing.

I want to express myself in public space in a way that feels personal and more meaningful than a private expression, because I want to connect to other people and other Lostmissing stories. This project is a public expression of grief in order to feel hopeful again—it's about that random poster you see and you don't know what it means but your eyes get bright all a sudden.

Lostmissing #13

It's amazing how something as simple as a voice saying hello can calm me, just hello, hello from the distance. I wasn't sure if the distance was the phone or you or both of you, but that's all I got. Hello, and then. And then I called back, before I was so sure of things I wanted to say I mean I didn't know what I wanted to say but I knew that I wanted to express my anger. But then after hello, just hello, I don't know what to say. I say: Did you just answer? I guess call me back, if you're calling me back.

So now I get to sit here and guess some more, guess whether you hung up on me because for a second you didn't remember my number and you just answered out of habit and then oh, you remembered, and you hung up on me. Or maybe your phone went dead. Pretty doubtful, but this is how my brain works: I'm filled with doubt. Not in general, but maybe about you, and our relationship, and its sudden rupture. It's funny how I feel calmer now. When the phone was ringing I felt all that dread and nervousness, especially when—hello—and I paused, didn't know what to say. I guess I'll have to call again.

(Lostmissing #14 says, "I can't believe you hung up on me" over and over again on the wall of graffiti.)

Lostmissing #15

I'm sick of thinking about your glassy eyes I'm sick of thinking about calling you in an emergency any emergency and you would always respond—if you could. How you rarely called me in that way except right when you tested positive and then I remember your glassy eyes again. I'm sick of thinking about the way you used to hold me and how safe it felt. I'm sick of thinking of things to tell you, random things like the beautiful clanky messy song I want to dance to right now even when I'm thinking about you and the original it's covering and you would know the original. I don't.

I'm sick of thinking about what to say when I run into you, if I run into you, and how I'll feel crushed and usually I want to express exactly how I'm feeling but then I end up acting like I'm OK even if I'm saying that I'm terrible. I don't want to act like I'm OK but it always ends up happening. I want to go right to the feeling not hold back, especially with you who I've trusted for so long for so long I've trusted you even in my body, with you I could go right to the feeling.

But my anger turns so swiftly to sadness and it's not the sadness I want to show you. You already know about the sadness. But what makes me sad now is that I don't think it'll feel good to express my anger. And maybe you won't know exactly what it means but you'll know that I never get angry that way and especially not in public. And maybe when it shoots to my head and I say something like, I can't believe how you're treating me it's disgusting, maybe instead of the distance I'll just feel rage which is a kind of closeness or if the rage crashes fast then at least it'll happen after you're out of sight. Or maybe it doesn't matter whether you're out of sight. Maybe all that matters is that then I can go right to the sobs that place where my whole body collapses and I know that it's something that can hold me. I haven't gone there yet maybe the sobs are the most important thing even if it's the anger I'm trying to express.

(Lostmissing #16 is a letter from someone about Lostmissing #11, about someone's own Lostmissing relationship, pasted as an addition to the original Lostmissing #11.)

Lostmissing #17

I'm not good for your recovery. I might make you feel too much I might make you cry I might make you think about whether

recovery isn't just avoiding the liquor I might make you question things you don't want to question I might make you think about the past. Because when you're in a relationship for sixteen years that means most of the sixteen years is the past and that's one of the things that makes everything mean so much. I might make you think about what everything means. I might make you think about me. I might make you think I'm not good for your recovery even though I've spent years longer without the liquor without the drugs I remember that time you said: You don't understand what it means to be an addict. Maybe that was the beginning of losing you.

Lostmissing #18

Tonight after the rain stopped I walked all the way up the hill to the top and it was so beautiful I could look down in three directions, the streets were already dry I guess because the rain just rolled right down them and everything was clear and still and I realized I could never ever ever give up this time of night, beautiful deserted clear gorgeous night and then I realized maybe you're turning 40 this year, and I wondered what that means to you so I called and left this message.

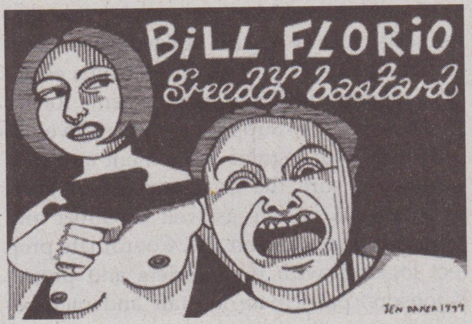
But then I remembered wait, you turned 40 last year or maybe it was two years ago and it's so strange how six months without talking to someone you're so close to for so long makes you forget these simple things. I mean I remember the date but I don't remember how many years, and maybe that's good because I don't think about that kind of thing so much. From the top of the hill everything glowed and I used to live here for people like you but now I guess I live here for the views, the air blowing in cooler and fresher through the darkness.

Later I was leaving the house, daytime now and I glanced into the residence hotel at the end of the block and there you were, or someone like you, taller actually but you know how when you haven't seen someone for a while you start seeing them in other people. I saw your tattoos on his arms and the cigarette in his mouth gaunt face obviously tweaking I wondered if you had gone in a different direction than I'd imagined. I mean I imagined many things, but I never imagined I'd lose you to AA. I guess drugs didn't make you inhale a different worldview they made you forget, and then remember. I wonder what you remember now.

***

If you want to participate in this Lostmissing project, feel free to put up these posters anywhere you desire, and send photos if you're driven. You can download all the posters via my blog, nobodypasses.blogspot.com, or I can send them to you. My latest book is a novel, *So Many Ways to Sleep Badly;* and yes unfortunately I'm still sleeping badly!

You can communicate with me via www.mattildabernsteinsycamore.com, which includes past *MRR* columns. Or you can write to me at 537 Jones Street, #3152, San Francisco, CA 94102.



I've been thinking about Barak Obama's message of national service for kids coming out of high school and college, and about how this wasn't something I ever really thought about when I was that age. Well for one thing, I was actually making a lot of money toward the end of high school, and had already spread myself pretty thin as far as working full time, going to college full time doing a fanzine pretty full time (I think I published three issues during my first college year) and joining a band that played all the time and was recording an LP.

What if I had signed up for nine months to two years with some sort of AmeriCorps program instead? Maybe I wouldn't have spent eight years changing my major. Well wait, I'm old—and AmeriCorps didn't actually exist then, although I suppose I could have signed up for it when it first started.

Ok, well I'm at the AC Web site right now. It's so refreshing to see a big government-funded agency that has such a friendly and straightforward Web site. Well well… lets just see a list of all the AC programs so I can nix some of them right off the bat and zoom in on something that would be right up my alley.

Hmm… I expand the tab that says, "About AmeriCorps programs," and well, well, well, it doesn't show me any actual programs—it just shows six different sections of Americorps: AmeriCorps State, Americorps National, Americorps VISTA, Americorps NCCC, AmeriCorps – Helping to Rebuild Communities in the Gulf Coast and Iowa Flood Relief – VISTA Summer Associate Program. OK, if this was a menu at a restaurant, it would say "Appetizers, Starters, Snacks, Deep Fried Dishes, Veal Calamari with Red Sauce and Spicy Peppers and Joe's Massage Parlor." Great!

OK, let's try again. It looks like there's no way imaginable to actually see a list of everything possible. Let's use the little wizard. It says, "Tell us your interest." I mean if I were going to try and strategize this experience, I'd probably pick something that wasn't backbreaking hard labor and that attracts a lot of bleeding heart liberal women who would find me funny and sensitive.

Here are my choices for "Tell us your interest:"

Community Development, Community Outreach, Children/Youth, Disaster Relief, Economic Development, Education, Entrepreneur/Business, Elder Care, Ex-Offender Re-Entry, Environment, Health, Hunger, Hurricane Katrina, Homelessness, Housing, Homeland Security, Neighborhood Revitalization, Public Safety, Technology.

They have every US state listed, as well as Samoa, Guam and the Virgin Islands. It's sort of like choose your own misadventure. Well, right now I'd be choosing Entrepreneur/Business and Guam and see what sort of domestic sweatshop I could build—but back in the day I'd probably go for California and Environment, figuring it would be the cushiest, yet have high potential for meeting entertaining whackjobs. So I choose this *Let's Make a Deal*-like combination and it gives me something that looks like a job listing:

Great VISTA Leader Year with Habitat for Humanity

Northwest Service Academy-Spring Positions

The Arab American Resource Corps

After School Program and Youth Case Management Assistant

AltaMed Health Services Corporation - Community HealthCorps

AmeriCorps Corps Respond/Marin Conservation Corps

AmeriCorps NCCC

OK, so three out of seven have something to do with the environment. I don't know exactly why I got old people—House Building, Arabs and Health Care—but let's see if I qualify for any of these…

Northwest Service Academy—Spring Positions

Member Duties: Northwest Service Academy is recruiting for over 50 positions serving throughout Oregon and Washington. The NWSA's mission is: To preserve and restore the natural environment, and to develop community leaders through service and community partnerships. Our members serve on teams and individually with local non-profits, government agencies and schools. Current positions focus on: Riparian Enhancement,

Community Engagement, Watershed Restoration, Habitat Stewardship, Trail building, Wildfire Prevention, Service-Learning Youth Program and much more. Full position descriptions with details on how to apply are located on the NWSA website, www.nwserviceacademy.org.

OK great, this is serious nature boy stuff, and they'd probably take anyone, except it's not in California.

After School Program and Youth Case Management Assistant

Please note:

"This listing is currently not accepting applications."

"Position Overview: Develop and facilitate evaluation for middle school and high school youth program participants. Develop and facilitate case management system for middle school and high school youth program participants (including: crisis prevention and response, academic planning and support, mentoring and internships, family involvement, etc.). Develop and facilitate case management for five-week study abroad program in Baja, California, Mexico. Act as an assistant instructor for marine science activities. Improve tracking and case management of Aquatic Adventures alumni currently in college. Investigating and managing summer opportunities for high school and college students. Assist in special projects that may include: Development of program materials Coordination of community and environmental events.

OK, it looks like they made this one up just to make folks think some amazing dream AmeriCorps tasks are really out there. Did they mention everyone involved is in great shape and off-time will be spent nude sunbathing?!

AmeriCorps Corps Respond/Marin Conservation Corps

Please note:

"This listing is currently not accepting applications."

Member Duties: Members will help prepare Marin County for emergencies by building fire breaks, preparing creeks for floods, and training community members in emergency preparedness. Members will be trained in disaster response skills during the program year, including at least five disaster response-training modules on topics such as mass care, shelter operations, disaster logistics, first aid/CPR etc. Members will develop the skills necessary to respond effectively in a simulated or actual disaster.

This mixes the nature superhero aspect of choice A, with the not-even-available choice B.

The last choice is AmeriCorps NCCC Team Leader - Winter 2010

Member Duties: Supervise, motivate, direct, and coordinate a team of young adults in a structured program of service, education, and training; maintain order; develop positive team morale; foster teamwork; monitor standards of behavior; ensure the safety of the members, including the proper use of equipment; model a good work ethic and work alongside members to set the work pace. Plan team schedules that result in the execution of project objectives and activities. Manage service-learning projects, locally or on spikes (sites away from the main campus where teams establish temporary living arrangements for up to two months) Support member development through regular assessment and goal setting. Ensure the development of good work habits on site as well as career and interpersonal skills off site. Coordinate project logistics with unit leaders and project sponsors, participate in staff and member meetings, and serve as programmatic and administrative liaison between members and staff.

This description keeps it as vague as possible—the only good aspect being that you will get to push around other people, although it doesn't specify if these will be fellow AC corps members or teenagers you're expected to recruit yourself from the local population. The possible areas this full-time uniformed position will cover could be any of these: CommunityOutreach EnvironmentNeighborhoodRevitalization, HungerElderCareHurricaneKatrinaCommunityandEconomicDevelopmentHomelessnessDisasterRelief, or EducationPublicSafetyChildren/YouthHealthHousing.

Well I have to say, people join the freaking Army with promises of education and seeing the world, and they eat it and end up hurt or killed or severely traumatized. I think if I were to pick any of these, I'd go with the last (you're going to do something, all we can promise is you won't starve to death—assuming you don't mind eating garbage).

I just finished a book about the Hitler Youth, and while the heart wasn't exactly in the right place the entire time, I've emerged with an opinion that if Germany didn't go to war, it probably would have served an excellent model of public service for young people. When the HJ, as it was called, was started, civil service was a large part of it. Boys and girls were sent off for a month or two to help the German economy during the Depression. Although some view this as free slave labor, a lot of the progress made by Hitler during the pre-war years can be attributed to the young people of Germany organizing and pitching in for their country.

While adults maintained the top ranks, the entire organization was managed by 16- and 17-year-olds. I think if you can empower young people in this way, a lot can be accomplished. While the economy is not at the horrible level of Nazi Germany under Versailles, it's still a possibility, and perhaps national service is the way to go. Right now, super-smart kids are getting out of college, and the idea of getting a job in the finance sector is not even feasible. The feeling of helplessness is something that really can be harnessed into some positive energy, and I could see the sort of empowerment to fix everything the adults have been bumbling over for decades really happening. I'm not sure that all of these programs have the ability to do this. Some of the people I know who've done AmeriCorps did get this sort of experience out of it, while others felt they were just given things to do that didn't have enough impact to make them feel like their job was dire, urgent and important.

It's funny how a lot of these programs are looking for that go-getter, born leader quality—but in all actuality a lot of us have been volunteering our time and energy for good things for years. Food Not Bombs punks have been feeding garbage to the homeless for decades now. I know all sorts of punks who have been heavily involved in political information gathering, creating flyers, making zines, reprinting PETA articles—and anything else that didn't actually involve getting off their ass and working.

While we've had punks who beat up people for drinking—and some who've joined cults just because it seemed cool to shave your head, not eat meat and bang a tambourine—maybe it would be interesting if someone started up a genre where it was suddenly cool to build a house for poor people, or spray rat poison in housing projects, or bury logs for soil erosion for a year or so. Maybe some good music would even come out of it. But c'mon, they really need to work on their Web site.

RALL DEAL

America is a nation of laws—laws enforced by Spain.

John Yoo, Jay Bybee, David Addington, Alberto Gonzales, William Haynes and Douglas Feith wrote, authorized and promulgated the Justice Department "torture memos" that the Bush administration used for legal cover. After World War II, German lawyers for the Ministry of Justice went to

prison for similar actions.

We've known about Yoo et al.'s crimes for years. Yet—unlike their victims—they're free as birds, fluttering around, writing op/ed columns…and teaching. At law school!

Obama has failed to match changes of tone with changes in substance on the issue of Bush's war crimes. "We need to look forward as opposed to looking backward," he answered when asked whether he would investigate America's worst human rights abuses since World War II. Indeed, there's no evidence that Obama's Justice Department plans to lift a finger to hold Bush or his henchmen accountable.

"They should arrest Obama for trying to impersonate a president," one wag commented on the *San Francisco Chronicle*'s Web site. Fortunately for those who care about US law, there are Spanish prosecutors willing to do their job. Baltasar Garzón, the crusading prosecutor who went after General Augusto Pinochet in the '90s, will likely subpoena the Dirty Half Dozen within the next few weeks. "It would have been impossible to structure a legal framework that supported what happened [in Guantánamo] without Gonzales and his pals," argues the criminal complaint filed in Madrid. When the six miscreants ignore their court dates (as they surely will), Spain will issue international arrest warrants enforceable in the 25 countries that are party to European extradition treaties. All hail King Juan Carlos I!

Which brings us to a leaked report by the Red Cross, which is famous for its traditional reticence to confront governments. Which means that physicians are enjoined to do no harm. Doctors are prohibited, by their ethical code of conduct, from attending, much less participating in, torture. (What does this have to do with Bush's lawyers? Hold on. I'm getting there.)

The Red Cross found that CIA doctors, nurses and/or paramedics "monitored prisoners undergoing waterboarding," apparently to make sure they did not drown. Medical workers were also present when guards confined prisoners in small boxes, shackled their arms to the ceiling, kept them in frigid cells and slammed them repeatedly into walls," reported the *New York Times*.

"Even if the medical worker's intentions had been to prevent death or permanent injury," the report said, they would have violated medical ethics. But they weren't there to protect anyone but the CIA. They even 'condoned and participated in' ill treatment…[giving] instructions to interrogators to continue, to adjust or to stop particular methods." Charming.

Since 1945, at least 70 doctors around the world have been prosecuted—20 for participating in torture—but not Bush's CIA torture facilitators. Not by this president. Asked to comment on the Red Cross report, a spokesman for CIA director Leon Panetta replied that Panetta "has stated repeatedly that no one who took actions based on legal guidance from the Department of Justice at the time should be investigated, let alone punished." (There's the lawyer connection.) Which is similar to what Obama said about the torturers: "At the CIA, you've got extraordinarily talented people who are working very hard to keep Americans safe. I don't want them to suddenly feel like they've got to spend all their time looking over their shoulders and lawyering up." Don't you just hate being micromanaged when you're torturing people?

Ah, the great shell game of American justice. You can't prosecute the torturers because their lawyers advised them that torture was OK. You can't prosecute the lawyers because all they did was theorize—they didn't torture anyone. You can't prosecute the president and vice president who ordered the torture because they have "executive privilege" and, anyway, who would put a head of state on trial? What is this, Peru?

What's the flip side of a victimless crime: a perp-less crime?

It's a neat circle, or would be if it fit, but drink some coffee and let the caffeine do its thing and it soon becomes apparent that it doesn't come close. The trouble for the Bushies, and now for Obama—they're his torturers now—is that lawyers are bound by a higher code than following orders.

Yoo, Bybee, Addington, Gonzales, Haynes and Feith were asked by White House officials to come up with legal cover for what they knew, or ought to have known, were illegal acts under US and international laws and treaties—including the Geneva Conventions (which were ratified by the US and therefore hold the force of US law). Since they don't deny what they did—indeed, they continue to justify it—their presumed defense if they wind up on trial in Europe would be that they were just following orders.

However, the decision in the 1948 trials of German attorneys, immortalized in the fictionalized film *Judgment at Nuremberg*, makes it clear that a lawyer's duty is to the law—not his government and not just his own country's law—international law. The Nuremberg tribunal acknowledged that Nazi Germany was an absolute dictatorship in which everyone answered to Adolf Hitler and could be shot for disobeying. Nevertheless, the court ruled, "there were [German] restrictions for Hitler under international law." Despite his total legal authority within Germany, Hitler "could issue orders [that violated] international law."

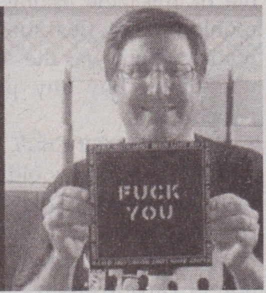
Obeying a direct order from Hitler, in other words, was illegal if it violated international law. And German lawyers went to prison for doing just that.

The six lawyers about to face charges in Spain didn't have to worry about Nazi firing squads. They were rank opportunists trying to advance their careers in an administration that viewed laws as quaint, inconvenient obstacles. Here's how unafraid they are: Feith recently penned an op/ed in the *Wall Street Journal*, daring—double-daring—Obama's Justice Department to go after him.

"If President Barack Obama and the prosecutors see a crime to be prosecuted, they can act," Feith wrote.

One can only hope. In the meantime, we'll always have Spain.

AL QUINT



You're going to have to forgive me if I seem a bit grouchy while writing this column. I had a molar extracted a little over two weeks ago and have endured some of the worst dental pain I've ever had. Its made a bit of a comeback in the last few days that wasn't helped by getting the first of what will likely be many bills from this dentist. Ellen goes there too, and I think by the time we're each through with our latest rounds of dental work, this dentist will be able to put an addition on her house—maybe a couple… maybe a swimming pool. I went into the wrong business, that's for sure.

But here's some sick irony. Ellen got a thank-you letter from this dentist yesterday for referring me to the practice and she was sent one movie pass and a coupon for a large soft drink. Let's consider this for a moment—one movie pass? We're spending what will end up being at least a few grand by the time all of this work is done and they couldn't cough up one more pass? And a *dentist* sending a coupon for sugar soda. I know we could get a diet soda, but that's not exactly encouraging good dental health, is it?

Come to think of it, the dentist I went to for a few years offered warm chocolate chip cookies to take home. No, I'm not making that up. I mean, I took 'em up on it occa-

sionally, but it's a far cry from Dr. Talkov, the dentist I had for 28 years. He had posters on his walls urging his patients to avoid the "bad guys," like candy, soda and the like and eat healthy foods like veggies. You had a package of chocolates with sinister eyes staring at you and, as a counterpoint, a smiling bunch of celery. I don't think Dr. Talkov would much approve of the modern-day approach. And I suppose I should have had him do some of the recommended work back then and, perhaps, I wouldn't be paying the (big) price now.

But, hey, I have the punk rock to comfort me—comfort food for the eardrums, if you will. And that sort of comfort or, more accurately, inspiration is the theme behind a book by Dave Brown, *Adult Crash*. Just what is an adult crash? Well, it's taken from the song "Minor Threat" by some DC band whose name escapes me at the moment. Incidentally, for those of you who wrote to me or this zine asking about that band's reunion show this summer, I once again remind you it was the *April* issue and hope you didn't buy any plane tickets before noticing it.

But with *Adult Crash*, it boils down to the whole "It's not how old I am, it's the way I feel" sentiment. That's the question Mr. Brown posited to various individuals for this soft-cover tome. *Adult Crash* is a collection of Dave's photos, taken over approximately two decades of show-attendance, along with reminiscences by folks with long-time involvement in the "scene." Yes, it's another book to add to the hardcore retrospective shelf but, as Dave explains in the opening salvo, "This is not a 'hardcore history book' by any means—you are simply seeing what I saw when I happened to have a camera with me at shows over the years."

Looking at the photos, there's definitely a sense of déjà vu since the images of sweaty bands and audiences don't change that much. As for the written segments, there's definitely a commonality in theme from the various contributors: trying to maintain some kind of creative, youthful spark while, at the same time, many of them have had to become more pragmatic—having conventional elements to their lives such as "regular" jobs, marriages, kids, mortgages and the like—but hanging on to something distinctly different from the "norms" (my word and it's a loaded one, I agree). Hardcore remains an affirmation, an element that can be inspirational as well as comforting, and *Adult Crash* conveys those sentiments effectively.

The book is accompanied by a four-song comp 7" with each band contributing covers—Down To Nothing doing Four Walls Falling, Cloak/Dagger doing Warzone, Kill Your Idols doing Token Entry and Slumlords playing a Gut Instinct song. Some of this stuff is fairly "moshy," but the production values are very raw and distorted and that makes these performances quite appealing—especially Cloak/Dagger's take on "Escape From Your Society." And while Token Entry's material hasn't aged well, KYI's "The Edge" is plenty furious. (Six Feet Under/Vicious Circle, www.sixfeetunder-records.com or www.myspace.com/vcrecs)

Modern Day Punk Rock Comfort Food

We start this portion of our program with a couple of local (to me) demos. FOREIGN OBJECTS shouldn't be confused with the old Boston garage band the Foreign Objects, who had a wrasslin' rock theme and did a classic song about Captain Lou Albano. These Objects consist of three ladies and one gentleman, with Terry Cuozzo, late of the Conversions, on vocals. Terry's vocals aren't as caustic this time around, but her singing still goes against the grain: Bright, energetic punk/post-punk with a solid rhythmic foundation. The bass-playing and drumming are killer. This was good enough for a 7" release. (foreignobjectsboston@gmail.com).

DRY HUMP would probably want you to know they're *not* from Boston—or, rather, their vocalist Erik would want to convey that info. Why anyone would want to brag that they're from the Lowell area is beyond me, but that's just some inside MassHole joking. There are four songs, three of them solid fast/raw hardcore and vocals that sound like they're coming through a cheap mike. On the other hand, the title track, in the number three slot, is a different matter. A dirge, laying down a repetitive pattern and some guitar sputter on top, but it's accompanied by a (fake?) call in to one of those national talk shows that deals with paranormal experiences. Real or not, the guy claims he's calling from Somerville, Mass., and talks about driving on a highway in Massachusetts and seeing some sort of flying object. Thing is, you can't always hear what's going, on as most of it is submerged under the racket, but that's the gist of it. I imagine there's a subliminal aspect here and I'm going to wake up under the control of the Dry Hump Cult or something. That sounds downright scary but it won't stop me from recommending this demo. (csprak-er@ gmail .com)

Tommas from Hjernespind Records and such bands as GORILLA ANGREB and AMDI PETERSENS ARME was tagging along with MASSHYSTERI when they were in town in mid-March and gave me a couple of pretty rippin' LPs. The first is a reissue of the HUL's 2001 album, "Den Danske Ungdom." "Pre-members" (as opposed to ex-members) of people from AMDI PETERSENS ARME, YOUNG WASTENERS and NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS. A straight-forward hardcore attack—some early Boston and Swedish HC and UK-82 style come to mind—and Kasper's vocals are raspier (screechy at times, too) than when he sang for NHFTK. The pace is mainly fast and frenetic, with a guitar sound like a disturbed hornet's nest (I'm projecting)—but they do slow it to a crawl for the final song, which falls flat, to be honest, but that's definitely not the case for the balance of this ripper. If you missed the boat on this one the first time—like I did—here's another opportunity you should take complete advantage of.

The illustration on the cover LEATHERVEIN's eponymous LP is *ridiculous*—a demonic looking headbanger shooting off a rather phallic-looking radioactive guitar device—and it screams '80s thrash-metal schlock. And you have to respect their aspirations—DR. HOOK wanted to be on the cover of the *Rolling Stone*, eathervein wanted to be on the "cover of *MMRR*" i.e., *Maximum Rocknroll*. If this were the '80s, this publication's illustrious founder, Mr. Yohannan, probably wouldn't have even allowed a review of this record, since he would have deemed it "too metal." Some might feel that way now but, writing as a child of '70s, hard rock and metal *and* hardcore *and* thrash metal, this reviewer says that Leathervein's eponymous debut hits all the right buttons—and it'd be a mistake to strictly consider this metal.

There's the rawkarama of bands like Turbonegro and, if the intent is tongue-in-cheek, Leathervein's edge is sharper, with speed bombs like "You Are The Problem," "Crossed The Line" and "Endless Night"—although the last ends with a heavy coda. "Welcome To The Ministry," meanwhile, will make you bang your head JUDAS PRIEST-style. Maybe that's the ministry they're talking about. I have to speculate, 'cause there ain't no lyric sheet and the Eagle's emanations are sometimes a bit tricky to decipher. The mighty noise doesn't require any sort of deep analysis, though. It just needs to be turned up loud. (PO Box 505, 2200 Copenhagen N, DENMARK, www.hjernespind.com)

Tony Erba's had quite the punk/hardcore/rock 'n' roll career, as both a bass player and vocalist—from the bruising hardcore of FACE VALUE to the Jap-buzz of H100s and 9 SHOCKS TERROR to the raw blowout of GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS to a stint with rawkers STEP SISTER. His current combo, CHEAP TRAGEDIES, doesn't really sound like any

of those bands, either. On their debut LP, *Volume 1: Souvenirs & Evidence*, it's a tandem of punk, hardcore and some rock 'n' roll that has a strong melodic base. Don't expect any out-of-control craziness, but the songs do have plenty of presence. The lyrics explore the dark side of the human existence, whether it's about the Zodiac Killer ("I Am The Zodiac"), the Manson murders ("Sadie's Eyes"), Opus Dei conspiracy theories, or mental illness and the death of "Americana," as described on "Going Going Gone."

The record is tucked inside a great gatefold cover with a mug shot of a defiant Jane Fonda, taken after a 1970 bust, staring out at you. I could say something cheesy, like that this music exudes a similar sense of defiance but... oh, I just did. "Ain't Dead Yet" does resemble that remark, expounding on still trying to have fun, still trying to keep sane when there's a four in your age and it's not the second number. By the way, Tony contributes to the *Adult Crash* book reviewed above, and pretty much states the same thing as in the song. At the end of the day, this album hardly sounds like anyone's death song, punk or otherwise. (Mad At The World, PO Box 230367, Ansonia Station, New York, NY 10023, www.matwrecko-rds.com)

Amor Y Guerra is a collection of new and old from DC's POLICE & THIEVES. The (relatively) new is the *Amor Y Guerra* EP—recorded in late '07—and another ten songs from their earlier 7" and demo append those four songs on this CD. This is beefy, melodic hardcore that was certainly influenced by their surroundings—well, past history of their surroundings with an abundance of sting and burn. I should also mention that influence isn't slavishly executed, but something they've thrown into their volume-enhanced tilt. And, yes, there's certainly an emotional element here, mainly in Carlos' impassioned (yes, I use the word too much, as well as many other words in this review) vocals and guitar surge. The Dutch band OIL did something along these lines some years back and P&T are also proficient at this sort of heartfelt soundburst. (Youngblood, PO Box 236, Ephrata, PA 17522, www.youngblood-records.com)

I'll use the "m" (melodic) word again in describing NO SLOGAN's *Aversion Therapy* LP. Their recent *Killed By Gentrification* EP only hinted at how strong this release was going to turn out. That "m" word is unavoidable, and so is No Slogan's relationship to Chicago punk history, in the way they harness brawn with tunefulness—from the RAYGUN-ish rock of "KBG" (re-done from that 7") to the ARTICLES OF FAITH-driven style of "Trepidation." I'm not quite sure why they named a song "Howard Jones" and give thanks (another gratuitous AOF reference) that it ain't '80s synth-pop (although I am partial to some of that stuff), but another urgent-sounding hardcore song. And whereas HoJo had "uplifting" lyrics, that ain't the case here. "Death Of Cool" observes the situation from Barack Obama's Chicago backyard and the question is, "Where is our prosperity?" Indeed. (Residue Records, 1446 W. Elmdale, Apt. 3W, Chicago, IL 60660, residuerecords@gmail.com)

Finally, a while back, I got to see Brooklyn's PERDITION play one song in Cambridge, Mass., before some scuzzy "travelers" threw a brick through the window behind the drummer and got things shut down. After hearing their 7" EP, I feel even more cheated by that circumstance. Over the past few years, I've glanced at a few analyses of various nuances of D-beat/crust/what-have-you and I know that there are elements to create different subgroupings. But, when you get right down to it, the tools are rumbling bass, bashing drums, loud guitars often sputtering with feedback and braying vocals. Perdition does that very well—especially in the bass department and the feedback enhances—but doesn't turn it into ear torture. I know some people love that shroud of hellaciousness, but I prefer being able to actually hear the riffs right up front. Definitely not next level, but the combination of power and rawness makes it a keeper. (Mountains of Madness, 302 Bedford Ave., Box 367, Brooklyn, NY 11211)

Al Quint, PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903/email: suburbanvoice@earthlink.net/Sonic Overload radio: www.sonicoverload.moocowrecords.com

Sad-eyed doggie of the lowlands, scoopin' up the cowboy's shit. Drugs are cool again. For a certain period of time, drugs were not cool. Welcome to Pizza. Pizza and Beerland. Smoked Internet. The Concept of the Thing. Shitty places that will be missed because they aren't around anymore: Jeff the Pigeon, BCO, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Atlantic Ocean, 90210, that stupid house with noise shows, Fuck-It-Tapes, skateboard ramp house, NTMTO, Flounder House, eBay, CNN Institute of the Arts, WITBAWDTSL, Clownieland, Sony da Stunta, Soundworks America, and Community Garden.

Lord Sheep walks into the room. "Hey, Stecks. I have a new T-shirt," he says. "Hey, man. Cool," I say. Lord Sheep is wearing a Wooden Shjips T-shirt. I ask him if they are the cool band of this year. They are. Cool, man, cool. Lord Sheep puts on a sick VHS tape: Career Suicide is playing. I can see myself in the audience. I am going wild. The bass player is riding some vibes. I check him out for an eternity. Daft Punk has been on the radio consistently for nearly five years. Lord Sheep wakes me up.

Wolverine: The Movie. Lightning. Bolt isn't the cool band anymore. Who is the cool band? C-SPAN: Rock 'n' Rollers and Out-of-Controllers. The year is 2001. I am at a Pg.99 show (who is the cool band for this year). They have fourteen members and sound like Pantera mixed with the Home and Garden Network. The year is 2005. I am at a Macronympha show (who is the cool band for this year in Pittsburgh). They have two members and sound like the Monroeville Mall. The year is 2009. I am listening to an iPod.

Fuck the Universe. Funky bass lover. Tyvek is the new cool band. Kim Phuc will be the next cool band. Belle & Sebastian is a band. Pillsbury Hardcore was a band. Lord Sheep plays me the new Wooden Shjips album, titled *Dos*. Lord Sheep is unaware that the first song, "Motorbike," sounds eerily similar to The Jesus & Mary Chain's song "The Living End," off of *Psychocandy*. Both songs are driving and have the word "motorbike" in the lyrics. Lord Sheep has a switchblade now. Lord Sheep has a leather jacket now. "Stecks, who is coolerm Eat Skull or REM?"

Current cool musicians: Kurt Vile, Emeralds, Extreme Animals, Black Pus, Do Crimes, Wet Hair, Dark Lingo, some band from Boston, Slices, and probably some other ones.

MINDLESS CONTENTMENT
WITH CHUCK BARRELS

For all of you who thought my debut col-

umn was a directionless and rambling morass of bumbling record hyping, here I am for another stab at it. Its been some time since I've done any column-type writing, so I'm trying to settle into the batter's box here and find my stroke. Maybe I was a little jittery in my first at bat. Gracing the same playing field as legends such as Rev. Norb, Dr. Dante and Scott Soriano has me a bit nervous—but I think I'm starting to get comfortable, keeping my head down and my eyes squarely on the center label.

So, speaking of the legendary Scott Soriano, the S-S Records Empire has released two class-A long players since we last spoke. I'm falling for the second LP from Orland, CA's NOTHING PEOPLE, *Late Night*, in a major way. Subterranean-psych moves with plenty of twists and turns and odd glam angles, perfect stuff for wee hours listening. Dark, but not dreary, and there's a member of MONOSHOCK in the fold this time around, adding extra value.

S-S has also pressed the latest DAN MELCHIOR album, in the form of a double LP titled *Thank You Very Much*. Melchior releases what seems to be a record a month these days, but he is amassing a rabid fan base that is scooping them up without hesitation.

Dan has been around the block more than a few times—doing service with BILLY CHILDISH and HOLLY GOLIGHTLY years ago and numerous releases on In the Red via THE BROKE REVUE—and has recast himself after transplanting down south as DAN MELCHIOR UND DAS MENACE, which is essentially a solo act. A gentlemanly English songsmith in the Syd Barrett-Mark E. Smith-Ben Wallers weirdo tradition, it's invigorating to hear him doing his best work after grinding it out for so many years. A double LP might seem a bit much, but Dan's a crafty enough songwriter to keep you listening intently throughout. (www.s-srecords.com)

Staying on the DAN MELCHIOR tip, I must hip you to a new NYC-based label called Convulsive Records that has two singles out and about. You might say, "Great, another micro label releasing Dan Melchior 7"s. Just what we need!" And I say, "Yes! It's great, isn't it!?" The label's DAN MELCHIOR single boasts two weird, garage cuts that will please any fan of the 2XLP and is a great starting point for anyone looking to jump in his pond.

The real beauty, however, is the debut EP from England's THE PHEROMOANS: four tracks of English eccentric post-punk DIY minimalism a la MALE NURSE—very refreshing, and the best band out of the UK since BLACK TIME and THE REAL LOSERS blew me away years ago. The records look as beautiful as they sound too. Kudos to their design department. Look out for future releases from GOLDEN ERROR and ANIMALS & MEN as well. (myspace.com/convulsiverecords)

In other NYC label news, Sacred Bones is keeping up their relentless release schedule with another batch of singles from the finest in the bedroom/loner artist genre. The most exciting bedroom we're visiting this time around is Timmy Vulgar's, the legendary frontman of CLONE DEFECTS and HUMAN EYE via his solo recording project TIMMY'S ORGANISM. A double 7" of bizarre-world psychosis, much like the work of his other bands, a little more raw, but with the weird knob still turned to stun. You'd swear the guy is from another dimension. Perhaps he is. Sacred Bones also has a new single from Australian synth-punk harshers NAKED ON THE VAGUE and the latest no-fi machine-punk single from the mysterious NICE FACE. These records come in both special and regular editions, and if you're familiar with Sacred Bones' track record, you know the special editions are worth having. (www.sacredbones-records.com)

From reissue land, we get more NYC label action, this time from Radio Heartbeat Records (which blessed the world with beautiful HUBBLE BUBBLE, RAXOLA and MILK'N'COOKIES releases over the past couple of years) in the form of an LP from New York power poppers RADIO CITY, whose legendary lost recordings from '77-'80 are now seeing the light of day. Melancholy jangle, drawing comparisons to BADFINGER, BIG STAR, BLUE ASH and other bands beginning with a 'B.' It's a beautiful package as always from this label that cuts no corners and spares no expense when it comes to putting out grade-A product.

This label does no wrong, and all power-pop simps should be pissing themselves over their upcoming release schedule. which includes stuff from 20/20, AMBULANCE, THE STRAND and everyone's favorite wimps THE QUICK and a long awaited reissue of the *Mondo Deco* LP. (www.radioheart-beat.net)

So, enough about NYC labels, lets discuss some exciting goings-on out west. I briefly raved about the FRESH AND ONLYS debut 7" last time around, and now their self-titled LP is available via the Castleface label, which is run by member(s) of THEE OHSEES. The connection makes a lot of sense: dreamy and creamy mellow-psych vibes rife with girl-group harmonies, clever instrumentation (it's rare when a band can work a xylophone, kettle drum and harmonica into songs without sounding like they're forcing it) and tripped-out melodies. Very excited about this band and I think maybe you should be too.

And while we're at it, even though I promised not to backtrack to old releases, I'll be damned if that TY SEGALL LP on Castleface doesn't just keep getting better and better. An energetic and creative take on the one-man band formula, the kid has tons of talent and I imagine the best is yet to come. Keep an eye out for him. Where to get these releases? Better start scurrying, as past releases on the label were hard to come by, and I imagine these might be too. Check discerning internet distros like a hawk.

Did I hear you mention THEE OH SEES? Or was that me? They recently released their new LP, *Help*, on In the Red, and it is surely a stunner. Aided and abetted by Chris Woodhouse on the knobs, this record storms out of the gate and sounds a bit rawer than the masterpiece that was *The Master's Bedroom*... I guess the common take on this one will be "Eh, it's not as good as their last record..." but their last record is a tough one for anyone to follow. *Help* is still every bit as beautiful as its predecessor and is definite year-end-best-of-list material. And I actually think this one may be more accessible for new fans, as they rely a little less on the lush-sounding effects and step on the throttle a little more: a must-have record at this point. In the Red also has the new *Intelligence* LP coming out any week now, which will be sure to freak out more hardcore record reviewers. (www.intheredrecords.com)

The sinister Almost Ready Records label is unveiling volume 8 of the *World's Lousy With Ideas* compilation series this month, and lo and behold they've stepped up to the big boy 12" format for this one. Sure to start brushfires throughout the internet blogging/message board community, this whopper features tracks from a veritable who's who of hip and happening weirdpunk / Termbo bands. We're talking VIVIAN GIRLS, THEE OH SEES, SIC ALPS, THE INTELLIGENCE, TYVEK, PINK REASON, TIME NEW VIKING and GUINEA WORMS.

I've been told eight different covers will be available, one from each band—although I'm unsure which ones will feature the mandatory boobs and/or penis artwork this series generally provides. You couldn't ask for a better snapshot of this current scene, and all of the tracks are of the utmost quality, not the usual throwaway stuff some comps elicit. Buy multiple copies before you regret it later. (www.almostreadyrecords.com)

For those not down with the weird-punque, there's this little label called Daggerman Records operating out of an SF apartment and releasing some mighty fine garage rock 'n' roll. The debut 7" from THE

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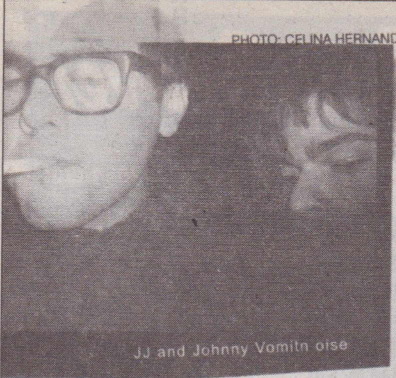

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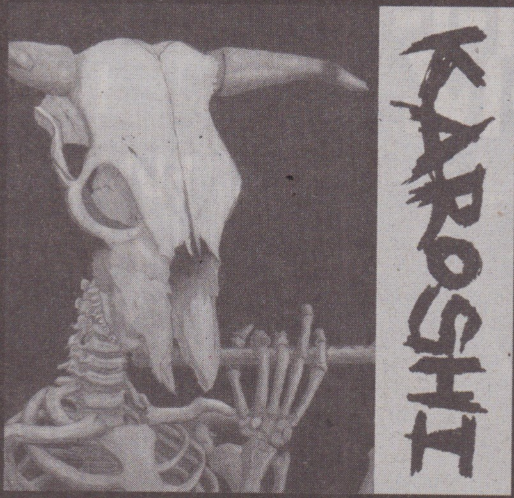

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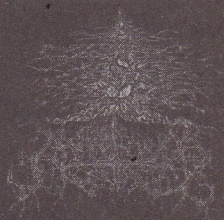
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And speaking of classy Bay Area gents, the PHOTOBOOTH 7" has ex-members of LYME REGIS, FM KNIVES and THE MOTHBALLS, so you know it's a good time. The A-side is a cute little Spanish language ditty / cover, but the B-side really delivers the hooky garage-pop goods. Both of these releases are suitable for both outdoor barbeques and late night basement keg sessions. And in an act of kindness not seen very often on the planet Earth, Daggerman has the unreleased second LP from the now-defunct DC SNIPERS on its upcoming releases chart. Prepare yourself now. (www.daggerman-records.com)

Rob's House Records has graced the 7" bins with a nice triple play this month. BRIMSTONE HOWL might well be the best band playing traditional garage-rock 'n' roll these days, and their latest 7" has them in top form. "Mammon" is an emotive rocker in the mid-western style they have perfected and they cover Neil Diamond to great effect on the flip. DEMON'S CLAWS is quite simply one the finest Canadian rock acts of recent vintage and the two songs on the *Weird Ways* 7" further cements that rep. Garage-rock with a country twist and whiskey chaser—some of their best work to date.

The third single is a split from budget rockers PERSONAL AND THE PIZZAS, who have already rehashed a song on only their second release (please insert your own joke about delivering, extra cheese, or slices here), backed with cuts from Atlanta legend BOBBY UBANGI (formerly of THE LIDS and GAYE BLADES), which gives you plenty of shi-fi garage action. Bobby was recently diagnosed with some nasty cancer, so it's great to hear him still banging out the tunes. Our prayers are with you Bobby. (www.robshouserecords.com)

Gotta start winding this thing up, so I'll hit you with some short-and-sweet recommends / news. Keeping it Bay Area, LES HORMONES' debut single on Heads Up! Records is worth a look for more un-weird garage action. (www.headsup-records.com).

The BRILLIANT COLORS single on Make A Mess records has me intrigued. Some songs make me say, "Yeah, I remember VELOCITY GIRL…" but then they whip out a lazy punk number like "Sixteen" that makes me keep playing the record over and over again. I think you might want to investigate. (www.makeamessrecords.com)

Detroit has some great up-and-comers these days that you've probably heard of: TERRIBLE TWOS, HUMAN EYE, TYVEK—but perhaps you haven't heard about their little brothers, FONTANA, who have released their second single on the Milk n' Herpes label. Creative and odd song structures are framed by blasts of raw punkitude on this two-songer that has me coming back again and again. (myspace.com / milknherpes)

JACUZZI BOYS and WOVEN BONES have teamed up for a split single on the new Needless Records label out of Florida. Shit man, I'm still amazed by all the great stuff coming out of the Sunshine State—even though Florida's Dying and their allies have been doing it for years now. JACUZZI BOYS released two of the best singles I heard all of 2008, and their tune is a nice teaser for their upcoming LP. WOVEN BONES are hot off the HoZac Records Hookup Klub release and really surprised me with "Grown Crazy," total fuzzed-out bliss. I hate split singles, but I love this one. (www.needless-records.com)

I'm gonna close this one out by talking about Burger Records—a label run by the kids from THEE MAKEOUT PARTY—and the incredible cassettes they've been releasing. That's right, cassettes. Novelty item in this day and age? I thought so too, but shit, CDs are a dead format now, and what's more dependable than good old tape? They've done awesome-looking cassette versions of their own record, plus stuff from AUDACITY (also on LP, and it's great in either form), APACHE, SIR LORD VON RAVEN and TRADITIONAL FOOLS and have more coming from NOBUNNY, KING TUFF, PERSONAL & THE PIZZAS, HUNX & HIS PUNX and more. Go dig that dual deck out of the attic and dig into some these tapes. And keep up the good work kids! (myspace.com / burgerrecords)

BRACE BELDEN is THE LAST PUNK

What did I eat for breakfast? What new records do I like? What did I last read? What are my views about women in punk, and women in general? Am I racist? Can I drive? If I can't, would I? And would I drive an electric car? What do I think of Sex Vid? Wavves? Vivian Girls? Angry Aryans? How many girls have I slept with? Do I sleep with girls? How much money would it take for me to blow a guy? Do I have any poppers? What age did I stop kissing my parents on the lips? How long do I hug for? Do I have a foreskin? How many ounces is it? Do I have any Teenage Head records? Am I a fan of Gasmask? Do I know the difference between a crustie and a crasher crustie? Can I tell the difference between Japanese people and Chinese people?

Jonathan Richman is retarded. I mean, seriously, listen to the fucking guy: "Here come the Martian Martians." And have you heard those Kim Fowley demos with him just singing with no music? Lick my dick, I Am Sam made a goddamn record (a bunch of them!) and I'll be goddamned if they're not that great. This is pretty old news, as these records came out over 30 years ago and I'm just saying I like them so girls'll think I'm sensitive. I haven't listened to anything but Face Value since I was pre-natal.

Sometimes I read George Tabb's column and jerk off, but that's only when I don't have a copy of Linda Ronstadt's *Silk Purse* handy. There's two things I like: reading about some vague time ago when this man I have never met got a blowjob and then puked in Janis Joplin's pit, and liberal country mavens.

When I was younger I did a zine and I got letters from prisoners all the time because my address was printed in *MRR*. I was 16 and my dad thought I was gay because he found my stepmom's bras in my closet (what the hell was that asshole searching in there for anyway? I hid the Adderol in my desk and my cigarettes in the bushes out front) and he's given me queer (get it?) looks ever since.

Anyway, these guys sent me endless piles of letters and sometimes money and I never sent them shit, because I believe in Law and Order and they obviously don't. Anyway thanks a lot you pricks, my stepmom thinks you guys all know my address and are gonna break in and take my dog or something.

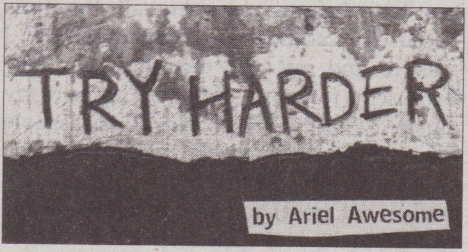
What band is better than Human Eye? Besides the Clone Defects? How can you even listen to—even like, even tolerate—shit like Wavves when this exists? That stuff doesn't exist. It's not a reality. It's like, why listen to C86 or anything fey or anything wimpy or even good stuff when it's not the Stooges? There is no better band than the Stooges ever at all at any time no matter what. The Velvet Underground is for New York skinnies and the MC5 were date-rapist lunatics (goddamnit they're the second best band). I'm gonna kill myself.

So one thing that's been pretty cool is that the last couple of shows I went to, there were fights at them—which is a hell of a lot more entertaining and satisfying to watch than some skinny geeks playing third gen-

eration DRI riffs. I saw Jeff from Nightstick Justice get punched in the face by a 9-foot tall wigger Ecstasy freak holding a boom box. It was awesome (and a hell of a lot better than Nightstick Justice)!

You might be asking yourself right now—or asking me, if you're standing in front of me talking to me—why I didn't write a "real" column this month and how come this is just a series of nonsensical, unfunny and tiresome (dare I say?) vignettes? Well that's because I'm a lazy piece of shit and I didn't write my column this month and I'm sitting here a day after it's due because for the life of me I couldn't get my article on Women in Hardcore together (that last part wasn't a joke—L. Gibbons and I are doing a point-counterpoint discussion—but I have a strange feeling we'll be agreeing with each other because she secretly hates girls and I secretly *am* one).

Nothing, none, not applicable, Vivian Girls suck, for the last time. I'm not, no, not sure, OK, don't get it, whatever, could be funnier, 12 (13), barely, 30, I goddamn wish, never did (stop or start?), don't, yes, 5, no, no but not opposed, yes, no—but is it my fault?



"I just got egged!"

"What? No way!"

Pat showed me the slimy side of his pants with a disgusted grin. Jon followed him in the door, laughing into a tall-can of root beer, saying, "Yeah, they threw them out of their car at us. They only hit Pat though."

"People still egg people?" I said, eyebrows raised—still staring at the drippy mess on Pat's pants.

"They egg Pat anyway."

I scrunched my face up, looked at Pat and said, "Well, at least nobody is trying to kiss you. I'll take eggs over gross old dude kisses any day."

"Who was kissing?"

"Ugh, it doesn't matter. I'm just grossed out and a little mad."

"That makes two of us."

I don't know why we were smiling, but we were. Arms folded, smiling at each other. Mad, grossed out, and smiling.

***

This night started bad, then got weirder and worse as it went. Everybody was late, bands cancelled, it rained, only a handful of people turned up to watch the bands—and to top it off, two older drunk dudes, under the guise of thanking me for the show, gave me too-familiar hugs and planted bar floor-smelling kisses grossly close to my mouth. The first one I chalked up to drunkenness and a slight case of the over-friendlies—but the second dude, swooping in for the same right after, that was conspired lechery. Add to this a band whose song mentioned going to TJ to catch a donkey show, and you have my idea of a bummer night.

But looking at Pat with his egg-y pants and folded arms, it couldn't be anything but funny. I started giggling hysterically, and I couldn't stop even to explain why I was laughing.

Gilman is like that. You get shit on, and when you think you ought to be mad, you're laughing.

First and third Saturdays: It's meeting time.

We are sitting around in a loose circle on dirty couches and metal folding chairs. These bi-weekly meetings let us check in with one another, since we don't all come to every show. Here we decide everything pertaining to the club—from frustratingly small quibbles, to the ideologically large. Anyone who has been to at least one meeting before can vote on any proposals brought up, and anyone can join in discussion.

These meetings, though sometimes tedious, were a large part of why I wanted to get more involved with Gilman in the first place. I loved that any issue you had could be brought up to the collective, and that even if you didn't volunteer at the club you had an equal say in its running, because as a punk who went there you had an equal stake in it too.

I remember soon after one of these meetings seeing "It's your club" printed behind Plexi in the entrance and finally getting it. Really getting it. It was *my* club. I knew suddenly that it was all of ours to take care of. The next weekend I started training to work in the "Stoar"— that was sometime in 2005.

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My palms are sweaty. I don't usually get nervous talking in front of big groups anymore, particularly here at Gilman. But I have an announcement to make, and one I won't enjoy making.

I have to tell them I'm leaving. That after all these years spent volunteering here, I am leaving and I don't know when I can come back.

I twist up my scarf in my hands and begin. "I'm moving at the end of August. And I can't be head coordinator anymore…" I take a steadying breath, and I tell them that I'm going to LA and will be gone at least a year. I am trying not to look at anyone.

I know it's not really such a big deal, that someone else will step up and take the responsibility I'm letting go of. But I can't help but be worried. A big part of my life the last few years has been just that: worrying over and tending to things that needed to be done at the club.

For the first time, it occurs to me that maybe I'm less worried about how the club will do without me than how I'll do without the club. As much as I've tried to do in the last few years, I know I've gained more than I've ever given.

I used to be a pretty plucky fighter, ready to punch someone out if they deserved it, but I've seen again and again that almost all fights start over nothing and come to nothing. Over and over I've seen fights erupt over stupid misunderstandings or drunken aggression and end in blood pouring down faces and flashing red-and-blue lights. Now my only respect is for those who can speedily prevent fights, or break them up. I've also cleaned enough split lips, broken noses and split eyebrows to know that y'all need to learn to keep your heads down (or your arms up).

I've gone to a lot of shows I never would have gone to, and am better for it. Seeing bands that I would have thought too poppy or sweet for my taste, and liking them despite myself. Which is how I ended up with a Defiance, Ohio record and Kimya Dawson stuck in my head. I found that across scene divides everybody is just as nice and just as punk.

I used to have to drink at least a 40 or a couple 32s in order to comfortably enjoy a show. Yeah, social anxiety is rough. But, after so many shows spent sober, and delightfully able to remember what the bands sounded like, I don't think I'll ever again feel the need to link how much fun I'm having at a show to how wasted I am.

I used to think every punk band was playing for the love of music, but I've had to see some pretty pathetically money driven displays that have opened my eyes to the fact that a lot of punk bands are just as greedy and obsessed with getting their "due" as any other genre. Instead of being disillusioned, I am instead more appreciative of the bands that are generous, and really are doing it for the love of it. Bands who give money away to other bands, who don't have or want booking agents, who don't have tantrums over the band order, and who say thank you and mean it—they have a very special place in my heart. How your band acts in the world has equal bearing with how much you rip, so be nice.

More important than any of this is how I've learned to trust myself as capable. The

other Gilman volunteers have trusted me to make decisions, and their trust has given me confidence to make those decisions, to take the lead in emergencies, and to know without a doubt what I am capable of (it's a lot more than I thought). In turn I've learned to encourage others to see what that are capable of, to push them to do what they're not sure they can and enjoy their success as much as I enjoy my own.

Gilman's appeal, its amazing-ness, is due to the very simple fact that it is entrusted to us (all of us) to make of it what we will. Even if you live a thousand miles from Berkeley, I guarantee there is something that that you can do that will mean the same to you as Gilman has meant to me. You can work unselfishly for the betterment of your (punk/whatever) community, share power and decision-making with others and respect the needs and opinions of those around you. If you resolve to build or maintain something good in your community, I promise you will get back 100 times what you give. And it will be impossibly hard to leave if you ever have to.

***

The meeting is over and it's time to get started on the night's show. Bands are loading gear in through the side door. I've got to go get the worker list and a clipboard to get started on staffing the show. I notice Pat standing in the doorway. He still has a yellowy string of egg on his pants.

Send stories about the show space/collective that you love to: Ariel Awesome, PO Box 301 Berkeley, CA 94701. Send electronic mail to arielawesome@gmail.com. Also, check out arielawesome.blogspot.com for an archive of these columns and other random and mysterious offerings.

Records have been getting more expensive. I'm not talking about rare records on online auction sites, but new releases in the DIY hardcore scene. I think there are a number of reasons for this, as we shall see, but perhaps the most troubling is the decay of the DIY ethics remaining from the '80s and '90s.

It seemed some years ago that a 7" retailing at $5 was totally inconceivable, but now it seems quite common. I remember for years pricing all the LPs in my distro at $8 each. Now it's not uncommon to see imports at $15 and up.

Manufacturing costs of pressing vinyl have certainly gone up. But raw vinyl pressing is still not terribly expensive, and the increase has been one of a few percent a year over several years. I can't say for sure if printing costs have risen. Actually it seems to me that there are more and more printers offering cheap package deals on record covers. Still, the raw manufacturing cost for pressing 1,000-2,000 LPs probably remains about $2.50 and a 7" around $1.

Shipping costs have gone way up. The elimination of economy and surface rates for overseas shipments meant a huge increase in costs of shipping US records abroad. And US postal and UPS rates have been rising steadily. Still, media mail shipping is a pretty good deal. Shipping an LP inside the US runs at $2.23 (at least until May). There has been talk of the USPS eliminating media mail. That would really drive up the cost of records shipped inside the US—driving costs up to $5 or so for the first LP.

The shift to online ordering has greatly increased convenience, but it has certainly added a mark-up for every order. Paypal and credit cards take a percentage of every sale. And labels have to build that into their pricing.

Indeed, this has been a big shift. In the days of mail order the customer paid for the money order. Many people felt that this would induce a customer to make a bigger order, to make it "worth the trouble" to go to the post office or drug store and buy a money order. That is to say, rather than ordering three LPs from three different distributors, they would order all of them from just one. Shifting this cost from the buyer to seller means that a lot of people seemingly randomly order single records from multiple distributors through the ease of online ordering. But this means that a 2-5 percent "tax" on every dollar that changes hands online goes straight from the hardcore scene to Corporate America. It burns me up that things went this way, but I have gone along with it because it is convenient and quick.

The postal service and USPS experienced a big rise in small package shipments with the rise of e-commerce. Remember when the USPS was trying to put a five-cent tax on e-mails because they were going to lose so much business? Instead they are shipping millions of Amazon.com and eBay parcels every day. They are also losing or damaging a very large number of them. Perhaps I have had bad luck lately, but especially around this past Christmas season, I had an outrageous amount of parcels lost, damaged or missing. This is a pretty big unseen cost that distributors and labels have to eat. I'm not sure, ultimately, how much effect it has on pricing, but I feel like people who are losing money on one side of the ledger at least subconsciously start to mark things up on the other side.

I don't think that bands are asking for more money or copies of records than they did in the past. Seems like most bands get 10-20 percent of the records pressed to sell at their gigs. Maybe some help with recording and production costs. Perhaps some bands are making bigger demands, but I'm not sure this is driving up prices too much.

Currency conversion has been a really big driver in the cost of records in the last year or so. The value of the US dollar has declined radically. While it has regained some of its value in recent months, long term prospects don't look too good to me. The exchange rate has driven the cost of imports—especially from Europe—sky-high. It's not uncommon for 7"s to cost me $5-7 to import from Europe or Japan. If I am to charge $2 postage, plus cover Paypal fees and the cost of a mailer or envelope, I'm unable to sell such a record for less than $8-10—and that's without adding any kind of distributor mark-up. This would have been considered an outrageous price for a 7" just a few years ago. Indeed, some import 7"s now retail for more than domestic LPs.

Recording costs have gone done, if anything. It seems like anyone (some days, everyone) is recording in their basement or on a home computer these days.

I think one of the biggest reasons for increased costs is lower pressing quantities. Spreading one-time costs over smaller numbers of records can really drive up costs. Many printers, for instance, have a minimum order of 1,000 of anything. It's hard sometimes to even find someone interested in printing/pressing a smaller quantity. Once you start pressing under 500 copies, the unit costs can double or triple.

Why are pressing quantities so small? We've covered this before, but it's a combination of decreased sales, increased diversification, and an increased focus on limited and collector item records. This leads me to my last point, about the decline of DIY ethics.

Most of the old heads from the '80s are no longer involved in DIY record labels or distribution. Some have moved "upstairs" to the real music industry. Most burned out or decided to do something different. Most of the people running distros and labels now came into punk in the '90s or '00s. Many labels and distributors are run by people who got into punk after the internet started to affect the scene. I feel like some (not all) of these people have a somewhat different per-

spective on punk records and distribution than a lot of people did in the '80s and even '90s.

Labels like Dischord and Crass established a template for punk music as being cheap and accessible. This meant a very low mark-up on records and pressing in large quantities. Downloading has kind of killed the accessibility argument. If anything, vinyl records are something of an elitist fetish at this point. Regardless, the idea of making records cheap and widely available is very much a thing of the past. The internet has commodified everything that can be easily re-sold by mail and built a cult out of every collector scene, which has dramatically commercialized said scenes and affected pricing and availability.

Today's labels are very much more focused and "boutique" in their outlook and output. This leads me to the luxury car vs family car analogy. The luxury car might only cost 10 percent more to make than the family car, but the dealer will charge 40 percent more for the luxury car because it knows it can. Labels can get away with a much higher mark-up when they feel that their records are special, "worth it," or most importantly are very limited and sure to be re-sold at a much higher price in the near future.

I think there is a lot less of the labor of love and helping out friends' bands and a more calculating mentality behind a lot of releases. That is to say, much of what makes it to vinyl these days is riding a trend, building on a formula that worked in the past or part of some kind of scheme that a label thinks will guarantee quick sales. This is somewhat in contrast to the slow and steady approach of the past. When underground music was much harder to find, and records not so ubiquitous, a band could put their best foot forward and spend years promoting one record with all their best songs on it. Now it seems like some bands crank out 7"s on a whim that go in and out of print quickly—only to be compiled later as a discography.

Another factor that I feel has really driven up the price of records is the decline of trading. Somewhat in the '80s, and very much in the '90s, distribution was done by labels and distros trading each other titles. This is still very much alive, but not nearly as much as it used to be. Perhaps I am overly nostalgic, but in the '90s it felt like the cadre of labels that were active in hardcore were people with similar interests and backgrounds and there was a lot mutual interest. Labels helped each other out by distributing each other's records. Everyone worked together and records got out at a pretty reasonable price. This was because most people accepted that trading was the cheapest and most efficient way to distribute records, and marked them up very little, usually selling them at the same price or only nominally more than their own releases.

These days, trading has fallen off a lot, and distribution has moved more toward a cash-based system. While it's true that the rest of the world is indeed cash-based, the fact that barter persisted so long in DIY hardcore was a real positive attribute. But with punks' increased commercialization, there seems to be a much more calculating approach to distribution. I know I have to very hard-nosed about how many copies of a record I can take, so as not to be stuck with a lot of money tied up in a non-seller.

I also have to think long and hard about expensive records. Is it worth it to buy 50 or 100 records at a high wholesale price like $8 or $9 to re-sell at $12? After postage and Paypal fees and record mailers, these records are shipping out pretty much at cost. Sometimes a distro bites the bullet to get a new release and call it a "loss leader," hoping people will order other records with a better mark-up. In my case, I often carry records I sell at break-even or lose on just because I really like the music. But often I have to think about ordering far fewer copies, or not carrying a record at all.

This was much less of an issue in the days when you were just trading some of your titles for another label's, as there wasn't any cash involved outside of postage. When I was younger I did a distro just to get cool records and help out bands. Now that everything is so commodity oriented, I start to make business (rather than ethical or artistic) considerations before ordering titles to distribute, as I'm often forking over a pretty fair amount of money and no small amount of work. That whole idea, that it has to be "worth it" or have some kind of pay off, seems like it would have been somewhat alien to people involved in the early days of hardcore, or even the DIY heyday of the '90s.

I think a lot of these factors add up to rising record costs. I have to admit, I pass on a lot of records these days because of the price. I also pass on a lot of records because they aren't very good and I feel my money might be better spent on something better, no matter what the price. So I guess I play into the process, as I allow labels to jack up their prices because they have records I want and I'm willing to pay for that "quality" (this is the luxury car analogy at work).

Time has shown that bands who want to get their music out cheaply can do so. Tapes, downloads, CDRs or records with screen-printed covers and inserts photocopied on someone's workplace copier, etc. I am still wholesaling LPs at $5.50, and 7"s at $2—same price I was 10 years ago—although I feel increasingly like a relic from a bygone age when I buy record for my distro with wholesale prices that are higher than my label's mail order price. I know that some people are reading this wondering why I'm even addressing this subject, because they are so used to things being the way they are. Others however, will probably "get it," because they can remember a scene with "pay no more than $5" LPs.

Hello again from Basement Land. Hopefully you enjoyed the Don Zientara interview from last month—mucho gratitude to him, once again, for taking the time to chat. No fancy interview features this month.

More drum shit:

One of my best buds in the world, and band mate, is a drummer. I don't mean he plays drums in a band, I mean he's a drummer. The kind of dude who has a bootleg of only the drum tracks from *In Through the Out Door* on his iPod. As you might guess, this has resulted in many strange drum-recording adventures—especially in the 4-tracking days. At this point, we have a good set of mics and a decent idea of what will be right for which recordings (at least based on what's at our disposal, and what has been managed before), so things are a little more methodical. Here are a few things I've tried that you might not think of right off the bat, along with a few things that I try to remember at all times.

Kick drums—I have to say I absolutely do not like the clicky/"punchy" kick drum sound. A lot of metal-punk, like TERRORIZER or AXEGRINDER[i] (opposite ends of the spectrum, I know), employs this sound in its most extreme form (I think it may be actually triggered on those recordings), and I can just never understand the desire to reproduce it. I've never heard a kick drum go "click-clack" in real life. Personally, I'm always looking for a boomy kind of sound. Even though it may not cut through the mix as prominently, I think it sounds more natural and gives the drums more power. To me, the optimal kick sound for faster music is something in the neighborhood of MOTORHEAD'S *Overkill*[ii] LP. Listen to the title cut

to get a good idea of what I'm talking about. Nice and meaty. It sounds like whatever the beater is hitting has some actual weight and depth to it, rather than sounding like the keys on a typewriter clicking away.

Now I realize not everyone is with me on this view, and if you want that, ahem, "modern" kick sound, get the mic pretty far inside the bass drum (you may have to cut a hole in the front of the head, or remove it entirely) and aim it right at the spot where the beater is hitting. You definitely want something like a pillow or blanket in there to deaden the sound and reduce any kind of echo. You might also want to tighten the heads up a bit. Also, if you feel like it's important to own a dedicated mic for recording bass frequencies—but you like shit like punchy kick drums and thin, twangy bass guitar—I'd recommend the Shure beta52 mic. If you've been around any kind of pro rock club or recording studio, you've probably seen one. There are used ones on Craigslist all the time.

If you're like me though, you probably want to go for something a little more "natural." Depending on the drummer's style, you may be able to mic the kick drum from the outside of the front head, but I find this to be risky at best. Most likely you'll get too much bleed, especially if you've got a lot of fast parts. If you can make it work for you, cool—but if not, try the mic just a little bit inside that front head. You may want to loosen the heads a bit too. I did one or two recordings where the front head was almost falling off, and it really had a nice effect, especially on heavier/slower bands. Highly recommended if you're going the sludgy MELVINS route.

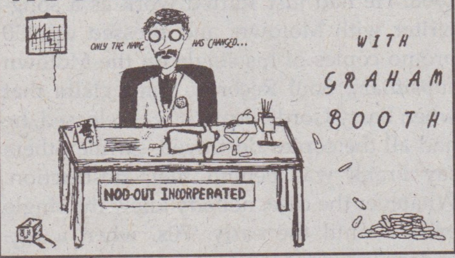
If you want to get really eccentric, go to the local hardware emporium and grip three or four 4 x 8 foot sheets of plywood. You can build a little tunnel with these in front of or around the kick drum that makes a bit more of an echo but still keeps the sound of the drum isolated. It's particularly useful if you've in a dead-sounding room, like one with carpeting. Most likely you won't need to take things to this extreme level—especially if you're only using a 4-track—but if it sounds right for you, then why not? The best suggestion I have for this (i.e., the way it was proposed when I initially read about it) is to have one piece of plywood on either side of the bass drum angling outward so that the edges are no more than four feet apart on the other end. Then lay the other piece(s) across the top of these.

You could also angle the pieces in front of the kit to reflect some of the sound, with maybe one piece laying flat in front of it. Honestly this is all going pretty far, and I've only employed this method once—but I wasn't displeased with the results.

I think a regular dynamic mic like a Shure SM57 or SM58 can totally get the job done with the kick drum. There may be a limit to what you can get out of it, especially with lower frequencies, but with enough patience in adjusting the position of the mic, the tightness of the drum heads, and the eq on the mixer, you should be able to come up with something that works pretty well. It might sound a little boxy, but I think that's totally manageable—especially if you cut a little bit of the lower-mid frequencies on the mixer. If you want to drop a bit of money on something fancy, consider the AKG D-112. This is a popular mic, much like the aforementioned Shure beta52, but I think it has a much thicker/beefier sound. You could honestly plug this thing in and get a great sound out of it with little or no EQing/compressing/etc. If you can obtain one for cheap or, ahem, free, by all means, do it.

[i] Who OK'd the stuffy drum sound on this LP?
[ii] If you don't think Motorhead is a punk band, congratulations—you fail at life.

ROCKET TO NOWHERE



Maybe y'all have already heard, but one of the world's most rare records is currently up on the auction block. If you know anything about Northern Soul, chances are you've heard the name of legendary Motown producer and songwriter FRANK WILSON. Maybe you even heard when his giga-rare *Do I Love You (Indeed I Do)* US promo 45 (two known copies) was sold the last time around for some 15,000 UK pounds.

The current seller, John Manship, is making bold projections that the record could top 100,000 oounds. I doubt it will get even half that, but it will still probably sell for more than any record in history. All the hoopla online has gotten me reading up on the Northern Soul scene and the insanity of record collecting in the '70s.

I've stumbled onto a few Northern Soul 45s at garage sales and flea markets over the years, but none of it has really clicked with me until recently. The "Northern" in Northern Soul actually refers to Northern England, of all places. Of course the music and artists are primarily American, but "Northern Soul" actually got its name from the DJs of Northern England who spun American Import 45s in dance clubs in the late-'60s and '70s: a rare case where a genre was named for its audience rather than its performers.

The message boards have been aflutter with FRANK WILSON auction predictions, but it has also brought out lots of stories about the Northern Soul scene and why a record like that came to be so important. Someone posted a great YouTube link to a '70s British documentary, *This England*, about one of the most famous clubs, WIGAN CASINO. It wasn't actually a casino, it was a dance club originally called the CASINO CLUB, based in Wigan, Manchester, an industrial city in Northern England.

But these weren't the kind of dance clubs you might imagine. The scene was based around "all-niters"—weekend dance parties that went through the night. Watching some of the dance footage, it almost seemed like the '70s equivalent of a rave. To propel the dancers through the hours, amphetamines and other drugs were an underlying presence, but the clubs weren't serving alcohol. These clubs would open on a Friday night and stay open until the sun rose on Sunday morning, and in order to operate through the night, they couldn't serve alcohol. It was completely dry aside from mounds of empty Coca Cola bottles drunk through the wee hours of the night.

The clubs were legendary in certain circles, and kids would travel up north via bus from the southern tip of England just to make the scene at Manchester clubs like WIGAN CASINO and THE TWISTED WHEEL. But these weren't teenagers looking for fun on a Friday night. This was a dedicated subculture of Soul fanatics and dancers who lived and breathed for dusty old 45s and next week's all-niter. Watching the footage had me remembering my days of loading into a van full of punks and driving six hours to a weekend fest in Dayton or Minneapolis or Detroit. The kind of stuff you can't really explain to a non-devotee: You either get it or you don't.

What makes the Northern Soul scene so interesting to me is that instead of being centered around live bands—it was centered around DJs playing American Import 45s. Besides the DJs, there was a thriving underground record trading ring. Kids would bring along their record totes to the weekend all-nighter and buy/sell/trade records with other fanatics. And unlike a typical club that plays Top 40 dance hits, all the DJs were scouring the bins to find the next super-obscure hit. The scene was so

cutthroat, DJs would craft up fake name stickers and labels to conceal their secret 45s from the eyes of competitors, ensuring that they alone owned a particular song for the dance floor.

How did UK DJs get their hands on such obscure American 45s in the first place? It's amazing to me that many records were actually bought in stores in the UK. Back in the '60s and '70s, American record companies and distributors had a huge surplus stock of records that either didn't take off, or were doomed to obscurity on tiny local labels. One way they got rid of their massive overstock was by selling things by the palette to discount retailers all over the world. Soul music had a huge following in the UK, so much of it ended up being sent there. I've been reading some crazy stories on the Soul forum (www.soul-source.co.uk/forum) where both young collectors and the old DJs from the '70s scene post. They talk about walking into their local Woolworths or Bostocks stores in the mid-'70s and buying obscure American 45s for 25 p a pop.

Of course, you could have bought the same 45s in America at the time. But most people didn't. Most people just bought the Billboard hits they heard on the radio. Obscure Soul music was overlooked and forgotten and thrown in the trash. It harkened back to my days in the early '90s when I could still walk into an old record store and find '70s/'80s KBD singles in the dollar bins. The music would have ended up in a landfill had it not been for some fanatical collectors who came along and rediscovered the music.

There were also more specialized collector stores in the UK that were more familiar with Soul artists. A few DJs and collectors even started side jobs as part-time record dealers. Some published mailorder lists, hyping new discoveries and legendary rarities. Guys like John Manship are still around these days and have become huge enterprises on their own. There was no shortage of Soul 45s in '70s UK.

Some DJs went the extra mile, taking buying trips to the US. White kids with thick British accents spent their "vacations" driving to run-down record stores in poor black neighborhoods. Opportunists? Maybe. But remember, back in the '70s, most records were still worth very little—and Americans just weren't buying obscure Soul music. A lot of the biggest hits on the dance floor were less than five years old.

A black record store owner was more than happy to have an anxious Brit buy out their back stock of a release that was just going to sit on a shelf and collect dust. DJs often returned to England with a 25-count box of some obscure 45, selling them off to their friends for three quid. A decent return, but hardly exploitative.

DJs traded war stories, telling close friends about particular stores that yielded the best records. Often along with an address, they'd be instructed not to leave their car unattended at a certain store, as it would be stripped by the time they were done shopping. In one story, a person dropped their friend off at a store and then drove the car in circles around the block for an hour because if they stopped, angry locals would force them from their car. These were neighborhoods that white people didn't go to, and didn't belong in. And the DJs were often just teenagers, on their first solo trip away from home.

The Northern Soul scene also had its share of swindlers and bootleggers. Starting back in the '70s, many of the most rare 45s were bootlegged and then sold or traded for high prices to unsuspecting collectors. Certain people gained reputations for ripping people off. And some guys took it a step further, which brings us back to the FRANK WILSON 45.

FRANK WILSON recorded his first and only single as a performer way back in 1966. He had just started work as a songwriter with Motown, and pressed up 250 promo copies of his single on the Motown subsidiary, Soul Records. Some claim that when Barry Gordy heard it was released, he had all the copies destroyed—while others say Frank was behind their destruction. Whatever the case, nobody knew the single existed until the early '70s, when a legendary French/Moroccan collector/DJ/con man sweet-talked his way into the Motown vaults. As he flipped through the archives, he ran across the FRANK WILSON 45, which he'd never heard of, and figured it must be super rare. He stole the record on his way out and the record traveled back to England with him.

The first people who heard it knew it was going to be a huge record. It had "that sound": with its four on the floor Motown beat, a quick and unrelenting pace and Frank's sweet vocals—the perfect song for the dancers at the all-niters. As expected, the song was an instant hit, and rival DJs all vied for the one and only known copy, a showstopper for their arsenal.

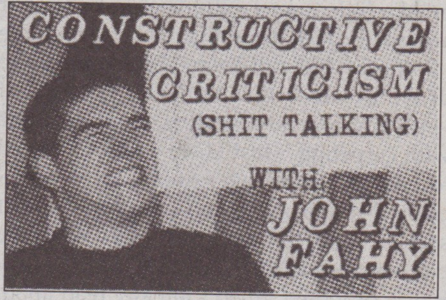
The record traded hands several times, each time for a bit more money. By the mid-'70s it had landed with a popular DJ at the WIGAN CASINO. It was such a notorious song in the scene that people would make the trek to Manchester from the most remote parts of England and abroad just to hear that one song that everybody was raving about. (Can you imagine this happening in the internet age?)

By the late-'70s, a Motown promo version was issued in the UK, and numerous bootlegs have surfaced over the years. You can hear the song pretty easily on YouTube or elsewhere, so it's hardly the rarity it once was. But for a moment in that original scene of the '70s, this was the end-all-be-all scene record that everybody wanted, but only one lucky person could own.

Since then, an additional copy surfaced in the collection of a pressing plant employee. Actually, after so many years of use, the original stolen copy has developed and edge warp and is in a bit of a rough condition. The copy being auctioned as we speak is the pristine ex-pressing plant employee's copy, tarnished only by a latter day autograph from FRANK WILSON to its current owner. It will be interesting to see whether it stays in the UK, or travels somewhere else around the globe.

Before I sign off this month, I thought I would mention that if you are interested in delving into Soul music, Northern Soul isn't necessarily where you should start. If you like the '60s Motown sound, go for it, but many people (myself included) often think it sounds a bit dated and oldies radio. (You can't deny early MIRACLES though!)

One reason it was called "Northern Soul" was because the Northern fans didn't like any other Soul music, so dealers geared "those" records specifically to collectors in the north. Funk was a dirty word to them, and a lot of great 45s from the '60s were overlooked until later because they were too slow and deep. I prefer the deep stuff, the funky stuff, and the crude weird stuff. If you are like me, a great place to start is the *Eccentric Soul* compilation series from the Numero Group label. And thankfully they do vinyl!



"But we can do it too. We can be real." -Tony Wilson, Factory Records

Another month, another late column. I wish I had some brilliant reasons for being late, like I've been jaunting from show to show, barely able to keep up with all of Florida's musical offerings. This is not the case. Most of the time I could be spending sitting down and typing this column is instead wasted by nerding out in my room

on some hardcore or post-punk records. As I did so this month, I tried to think of a way to better explain the bitch-fest that was my column-before-last. While I complained a lot about trends in hardcore/punk and music devoid of substance, I didn't really get to properly say what I think needs to take its place. Luckily, this month my bedroom-floor-nerd-out sessions saved me when I ran across a particular few records that made me feel like I could get across what I meant.

I picked up a live JOY DIVISION LP, *Les Baines Douche Vol. 1*, at a place called Rama Lama Records in Ohio last year, and have had that on steady rotation since. The energy that comes across on that record is unbelievable. The set starts off with "Disorder," from the *Unknown Pleasures* LP, and the drums at the beginning of the song set the mood for the whole show—frantic and kinetic. The whole show has an intensity that makes me envy the Parisian kids that were lucky enough to see it. While people went apeshit for the music JOY DIVISION played, it was more because it challenged them and never pandered to their tastes; it was totally unasked for and made out of compulsion. Factory Records' Tony Wilson wrote some liner notes for the LP that sum things up well:

"...A bunch of us working in a foreign city was one of the highlights of Factory life. Martin Hannett always referred to it as an "ASU." We were, in terrorist parlance, and active service unit. That's what it felt like. Spreading the message of the music, hanging out with allies and co-conspirators, cocooned in the foreignness of whichever city we were in."

"...This band was more real than most of us can still cope with. Enjoy."

It's interesting to me that producer Martin Hannett made the ASU comparison: "Active Service Unit" was a term coined by the IRA, which at the time, late-'79, were blowing up half of England and Northern Ireland. The analogy holds up. Those paying attention may have noticed the IRA splinter groups have taken to violence again recently, even though many of the reasons the war in Northern Ireland broke out in the first place have been settled and put to bed through the peace process, which began in 1994.

Still, like relics, the hardliners of the IRA stay on—regardless of the political compromises being made or the thriving economy—ready to shoot and bomb because they are compelled to do so. I'm in no way saying their violence is acceptable or glorious—it's threatening to send Northern Ireland backward twenty years and is re-igniting old racist attitudes that have eroded since peace came to be. It's actions like the Continuity IRA's, or 'Real' IRA's that are potentially going to bring back sectarian war that will claim more innocent lives than warriors, just like every war does. These hardliners are loathed by basically everyone on the whole island of Ireland, and they still carry on without a care, supposedly waging war in the name of Ireland. Still, there is something fascinating about these completely intransigent men and women who are entirely ready to face death or imprisonment because of one single, stubborn political fact: The British have not yet left Ireland. And so they fight on because they are compelled. And that's what I want to talk about: the compulsion to create something regardless of how anyone else feels about it.

Real music is the kind that is made not from being "influenced"—it's made because the person who makes it is compelled to—they have to get it out there. JOY DIVISION could have been another DAMNED or CLASH, but they had to be fucking JOY DIVISION because they were genuine weirdos that needed an outlet. Whatever this compulsion produces is not always pretty. *Closer* is not an easy album to swallow, but it's always real, and you can tell, and you can respect it.

A handful of bands that have immediately hit me this way come to mind. The first time I heard ENEMY SOIL, I couldn't think of a band that conveyed utter hate as well as they did in any of their crushing breakdowns (the RERVERSAL OF MAN split is a personal favorite, but I'm not much for their drum machine material). A given ENEMY SOIL song sounds like a stream of total fury, so pure that it almost stumbles on delivery because it's played with so much trembling hate, nothing sounds measured. Ex-members went on to create DRUGS OF FAITH, and the same uncontrollable rage is discernable there too.

Dave Wenger from M BLANKET/ ACHE HOUR CREDO/ DADDY'S HANDS wrote some songs that were simply great rock and roll songs: songs that were great for dance value alone. Some other songs though, perhaps the best ones from all three bands, were the tunes that Wenger worked some emotion into. "Coaster Brakes," from M BLANKET, is a totally beautiful song, as is "Kid Collision." There are hooks and melodies in these bands' songs that will stay with you forever. Whatever Wenger had going on—allegedly he was a pretty unpopular guy with a lot of people and had many problems—it made him create some unforgettable songs. The early DADDY'S HANDS stuff is probably the best shit Wenger was involved in.

Wenger shared vocals in DADDY'S HANDS with a girl named Emily, who had a child-like voice that sounded great opposite Wenger's raspy style of singing. The two also shared a turbulent relationship that ended before Emily and Dave died from a drug overdose and a hit-and-run accident, respectively.

CULT RITUAL, who is talked about relentlessly in this space (more space than Layla has devoted to SEX VID? Couldn't be.), writes songs that do not care if you keep up. The new album, from what I've heard, is no exception to this, and it is excellent. Again, this is music that sounds like it can't keep up with itself because it's got too much to say and it won't wait for you to decide if you're OK with it. There are no easy answers and there is nothing owed to the listener. You can get lost in it or just get lost.

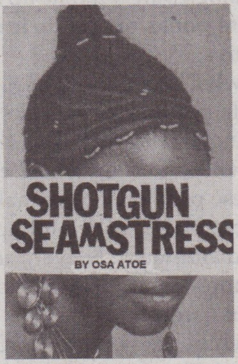
Sadly, CULT RITUAL is one of the few bands I can think of along these lines. There are too many bands around and too few with something to actually get off their chests. When there is music made from compulsion, it's completely obvious. Whether it's catchy or totally repellent, it affects us, and that's what we're looking for.

ENDNOTES:

1. DIVISIONS just played their last show and fittingly, it was played in total defiance of the police. I have their last document, a pro tape we split-released. Comes with a sticker, pin, silkscreened covers, etc. I also have their 7" EP available. Both are $5 pdd. Send cash, check or MO to John Fahy/15011 Lakeside View Drive/Apt. 2402/Fort Myers/FL/33919.

2. Check out my blog for MP3s from any of the Human Crush releases, including DIVISIONS and WE NEED TO TALK MP3s. I also have some live Life's Blood stuff up there now that is the best shit you've ever heard. PANZRAM demo will be along soon www.humancrushrecordings.blogspot.com

3. If you like good records at non-Ebay prices, check out ifbrecords.com. The site is never updated, except for the distro, which is done weekly. You'll find some treasures.



I didn't get called in to work today, which means that instead of spending my day substitute teaching in a classroom full of buckwild third graders, I get to sit in bed, reading zines and drinking tea. Right now,

I don't have any new zines that I haven't already read, so I decided to go back in time. I'll periodically re-read zines—like *Evolution of a Race Riot* (1 and 2), *How to Stage a Coup*, *Sander*, *Quantify* and *Mala*—just to remind myself what punk kids of color were talking about ten years ago. Ten years ago! Even longer ago, in some cases: I can't believe it has been that long.

Anyway, there very well may have been zines by people of color (POCs) before *Race Riot*, etc. came out. In fact I'm positive that there were, but the zines I mentioned above were the first ones I found. I like to re-read them because I see the zine I write as part of that short lineage. I'm curious about how the experiences of race and racism in the punk scene have changed since then and how they've stayed the same. I'm always wondering what new perspective I can add to that discussion as a black queer woman in the late 2000s.

The ladies who wrote those earlier zines (mostly women, some guys, a couple of genderqueer folks) were mostly Asian, Latino and mixed race (mostly half-white and half-Asian or Latino). I think there were only two or three contributions by black punks in both issues of *Race Riot*, which has always been disappointing for me, but which also kind of makes sense, because many of those writings came out of the West Coast, where there are tons of Asian and Latino folks and very few black folks.

Race Riot was an anthology put together by Mimi Nguyen, and *How To Stage a Coup* was another anthology put together by Helen Luu. Both publications came out in the late-'90s. These two women, and the legions of punks of color that submitted to their anthologies, had been part of predominantly white punk scenes, including riot girl. They were totally pissed about their experiences—and understandably so. These anthologies are straight-up rant fests, calling white punks out on their ignorance and hypocrisy.

I think what made racism in predominantly white punk or activist scenes more disappointing and hurtful than the racism one might encounter anywhere else is the fact that these people who are making your life miserable claim to be anti-oppressive, feminist and anti-racist. Naively, some of us expected more from our white peers and got let down harder.

Subsequently, many of these POC punks left the scene. They were bitter and fed up with their experiences. Now this is where my mind starts manufacturing millions of questions. 1. Where exactly did these "ex-punks" end up that was an anti-racist utopia? Where do you go if you're a person of color where you don't have to experience racism? 2. How did these people suddenly turn un-punk? I mean, they're all making a totally DIY zine together. That's punk, right?

Some of those people continued making zines and participating in punk after that, although maybe to a lesser degree. If you found a home in punk because you're a super weird queer kid, if punk is something useful to you, if it's the way you make art and the way you were politicized, how do you just leave? Where do you go?

What all of these early POC punk zines did for me was put me in touch with other brown punk kids. I remember meeting this queer Asian girl, Celeste at a BBQ/b-day party because I saw a copy of *Race Riot* sticking out of her bag. Later, we started a Queer People of Color (QPOC) group together, made up of about six brown queer kids. It was awesome! We made delicious vegetarian food to share with each other, we shared our family histories and we made real friend-connections with each other. It wasn't an "activist" group per se. It was just us carving out our own space—and it really did help.

Other people, like my friend and ex-bandmate Adee, were inspired by the existence of other brown punks in faraway places, and started her own zine called *Finger on the Trigger*. She wrote from her perspective as a poor, black, DIY punk hailing from the dirty South, who loved reading, traveling, sewing and cooking. Her zines were so cute! Through making them, she got in touch with black punks all over the country. The next generation of brown punks took the emphasis off of criticizing whitey and put it on loving ourselves. We started bands with each other, wrote each other letters, wrote more zines about our experiences. Plus, white people really benefited from those earlier POC punk zines, too—at least those white people who were truly interested in educating themselves about racism. They realized they were being stupid and pissing us off and they toned it down some.

It's kind of funny to me that our brown punk rock foremothers left the game while the next generation of brown punks stuck around and really benefited from the work that they did. Actually, it bums me out. When Adee, our friend Cassia and I started our band, New Bloods, we received support from former riot girls who never stopped caring about women and queers being represented in punk rock. Tobi Vail still works at Kill Rock Stars, plays in bands and actively supports new girl bands. Layla Gibbon, the coordinator of this here zine you're reading, is still active in punk and does her part to support zines and bands that are feminist and that involve women.

But where is Helen Luu now? What's Bianca Ortiz (author of *Mala* zine) up to these days? What about Iraya from that old queer-pop band Sta-Prest, who also was involved with riot girl and made POC punk zines? I actually sent Mimi Nguyen a copy of one of my zines and she got back to me saying that she really liked it. I know that she wrote a column for *Punk Planet* for a while after her "exit" from punk rock. I believe she's either a PhD candidate or a college professor now.

Anyway, the only thing I can assume is that it really was that bad for the POC punks who came before me. As far as my experience goes, I can definitely say that the pros of being a black punk outweighed the cons. But ten or fifteen years ago, that wasn't the case, and it may not be the case for many punks of color today, depending on a number of factors, including what part of the country they're in.

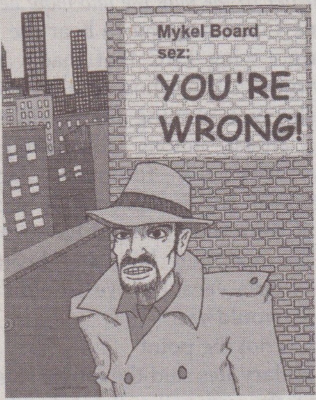
The people who paved the way for us did so and then moved on because they couldn't stand it anymore. So, as much I appreciate all the support that people like Tobi and Layla to give newer, younger generations of feminist punks, it would've blown my mind to see Mimi, Bianca or Iraya at one of our shows. It would've meant so much. It's immensely disappointing that punk rock, a movement that claims to be so forward-thinking and progressive has been (and to some extent, continues to be) alienating to people who do not represent a punk rock norm (which, by the way, isn't supposed to exist!).

I wonder what the expectations were of those punks of color who left punk rock. What did they envision for punk kids of color in years to come? Even though the fact that they left the scene is pretty much a sure sign of their pessimistic cynicism, I'd still like to believe that their intention was to leave the scene better than they found it. What was the point of putting out zines like *Race Riot* and *How to Stage a Coup*, if not to try to spawn some kind of change in the punk scene? Well here we are! The change (I hope) they wished to see in the world! People of color punks, empowered by the words and deeds of those who came before us, building community with each other, and ready to fuck shit up.

With all of the new books and DVDs coming out documenting riot girl, it's completely unacceptable that those riot girls' brown punk sisters are left out of that history. As much as people try to document punk history, punk rock can still be so a-historical. People leave the scene and move on, records and zines go out of print, white

punks continue to ignore the contributions of punks of color…and it's like all of it never happened. Well, a race riot did happen and I'm living proof. I know I wouldn't be here if other punk rock feminists and POCs hadn't carved out by force a nice comfy space for me to exist.

I guess all of this is just a long-winded way of saying, "Thank you."



"A drunk was in front of a judge. The judge says, "You've been brought here for drinking." The drunk says, "OK, let's get started." -Henny Youngman

There is a pounding inside my head. Tha*boom*. Tha*boom*. Tha*boom*. It starts somewhere on top, at the crown, and slowly creeps behind my eyes, forcing them open. My eyes are perfectly happy the way they are. Closed. Making it beautifully dark. Outside, there is light. Who wants light? What the fuck am I going to do with light? Light hurts.

Now, I feel a sticky stream of wetness start at the corner of my mouth and dribble toward my ear.

There's something in my hand. My right hand. Soft, squishy, like a limp Vienna sausage. I raise that hand to bring it in for closer inspection. It's attached. It's my dick. I must've fallen asleep while jerking off. I wonder if I made a mess. Whose bed is this anyway?

I roll slightly to the right.

There's a sharp pain in my ribs. Has a tormentor prodded a Christ-like wound into my side, opening up a huge gash? Did Jesus awaken with his dick in his hand?

I touch the source of pain. It's a book. A hardback, poking me in the ribs. I open my eyes and squint at it: *Dharma Punx*, by Noah Levine. Now it's coming back to me.

Flashback:

"Mykel," says Jennifer, "if you really want to get on people's cases, you should write about Noah Levine. He's really popular. He's a punk Buddhist."

"That's not so bad," I say. "It's better than being a punk Christian. But Levine doesn't sound like a Buddhist name. Did he change it from Ramalevinedass or something?"

"You don't get it, Mykel," says Jennifer. "He's in recovery. He's straightedge. No booze or drugs or sex."

"But he's recovering from that," I say.

"No," says she. "That *is* the recovery."

"Huh?" says I. "Giving up booze, sex and drugs is recovery? From what?"

"Addictions, Mykel," says she. "He's recovering from addictions."

What's wrong with addictions? Your body needs things and without them, it acts funny. That's addiction.

Water is an addiction. If you don't have it, your body acts funny. It dies. How come you don't see "Water Anonymous" groups springing up like penises at a strip bar? Why isn't anyone "in recovery" from water addiction? How 'bout oxygen?

I admit that oxygen has control over my life and I am helpless to do anything about it. I give myself up to a higher power.

Why isn't there OA?

The answer's easy.

Water and oxygen are socially acceptable addictions. These addictions are universal. We don't see them as addictions any more than mosquitoes see biting people as an addiction.

Drugs? Booze? Sex? These are universal. Nearly every culture in the world has them—usually as religious sacraments. The Catholics and Jews have wine in a religious ritual. Muslims don't drink, but they have tobacco. And they screw the hell out of multiple wives. Only those wacky Mormons—and punk Buddhists—want to deny the natural.

In American culture, addiction to booze, sex and drugs is not socially acceptable. Why? Those things actually make your body feel good. Therein rests the taboo—and the addiction. For these things, we need *recovery.*

I didn't get very far in the Levine book. I only read up to how he had a fucked up childhood, and that got him into punk. His father was a mediator. His mother was a hippie. Though Levine is "still a punk," he went from addiction to becoming a mediator.

Sounds like everybody else who resents Dad as a kid and then turns into him. Dad was an insurance agent. I became a punk. Now, I work for AIG.

I'm not being fair, of course. I should finish the book before I rip it apart. But I've got a deadline—and I've got other fish to fry.

So, this column isn't about that book, though it might be. It is about *you*, and your so self-righteous ideas.

I used to laugh when Donny the Punk said, "Punk is thinking for yourself." Come on! Punk is more conformist than Mormonism. You've got your uniform, your set of beliefs (love and its pain = emo, Race and Nation = Oi, anarchy = crust, liberal bounce = pop punk, straightedge = non-crusty hardcore).

Despite these differences, and because of the conformism, a thread runs through all these styles of punk. They are *outsider*—not mainstream. The music is not what your grandparents listen to, though it may be what your parents grew out of.

Lateral Flash:

Razorcake had an interview with VITAMIN X. Boiling it down, the band said, "We're straightedge, but don't care whether you are or not…"

That's better than preaching, but they're Dutch! Dutch people smoke hash in coffee shops. Dutch people can shop for whores on the street. Straightedge makes sense there. It is *not* mainstream.

In America, it's not like that. In America, you have to show your ID to get into a bar. They arrest you for pissing on the street. You can go to jail for smoking hashish. That means drinking, smoking hash and pissing on the street are things "bad guys" do. PUNKS ARE BAD GUYS.

For Americans, it's Nancy Reagan's JUST SAY NO. It's having the highest drinking age in the world. It's the censored (read nonsexual) film versions of every movie shown in our theaters. America's message is SEX, DRUGS, BOOZE = BAD! If you partake, you're a bad guy—or bad gal. PUNKS ARE BAD GUYS! Get it?

Let's get this straight… er… correct. Drugs are punk. Drinking is punk. Sex is punk. More than that, if you neither drink, nor take drugs, nor fuck. You are *not* punk.

If you won't let me put my head between your legs, I'll be sad, but I'll get over it. If you won't let *anyone* put their head between your legs, YOU ARE NOT PUNK—especially if you're American.

If you won't buy me a drink, I won't die. But if you *never drink*, YOU ARE NOT PUNK. Get it?

Last minute note: I can read your mind. You're thinking that I'm a totalitarian. Somehow, I'm imposing my will on you. Forcing you to do what you think is wrong. Who am I to say what is punk and what isn't?

Jeezus fuckin' Siddhartha. I have no control. I can't force you to do anything. I can only give my opinion. Tell you what I think. Your TV set has more control over you than I do. You have to think for yourself. If you can't do that, you probably *are* a punk.

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers: god@mykelboard.com) or Web site viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links and a chance to email comment on the column]

—> *Of course it was, dept:* Yeah, last month's

column was my usual April Fools' prank. I don't think it fooled many people. Chomsky may be a little pissed at me because I called him a holocaust revisionist. If I didn't apologize, I do that now. I was fed misinformation. In reality, he supports (as I do) the right of revisionists to speak their minds and present their cases. This does not mean he agrees with them.

As far as I know, Jello Biafra is still a friend. I've never met Oprah Winfrey, so she has never sexually molested me.

All the endnotes last month, however, were true.

—> *Still Lovin' Obama dept:* This is from an email from a friend in the Czech Republic: "Wondering how you are doing in your part of the world. Last Tuesday, I was at the Globe, where they were showing the US election returns. I had only planned to stay a few hours, but there were over three hundred people there and lots of people I had not seen in a long time. I was at a table with someone from Scotland and a woman from India—people from all over the world, not just the USA. I thought it would go late into the next day, but at five in the morning, McCain conceded. It was the reality that Obama actually won. People celebrated out into the streets, all nationalities. Quite an international event. People crying and laughing. I had a little cry as well, but went off to drink some more."

—> *Curious Barack dept:* Jim Hayes sent me a report about a Marietta, Georgia, bar that sold Curious George t-shirts with Obama's face on them. Naturally, local lefties wanted them banned. So did the folks from the original Curious George. Those guys are touchy… just ask George Tabb! Mike Norman, the bar's owner, responded by posting outside his bar: "GI's dying in Iraq. Thousands killed in quake. Gas $4 and a t-shirt makes the news. Shame. Shame!"

I say, yeah Mike!

—> *I can come out Jew… a little, dept:* While walking down Third Avenue, I see this protest right in front of some boring-looking office building.

"What's here to protest?" I ask. "Are you guys against neckties and large chests?"

"It's the World Zionist Headquarters," says an attractive girl showing me her protest sign.

"Stop The Slaughter in Gaza," it says.

"You guys don't look Arab," I say. "Not that there's anything wrong with that."

"We're Jews!" says the girl, and she gives me a leaflet that says she's with "Jews Say No," an anti-Zionist Jewish group. You can find them at their Web site: jewssayno.wordpress.com.

"Yahoo!" Says I. "It's about time."

One caveat though. Just because we hate Israeli policy, and the government, doesn't mean we should hate the people. I have some fine Israeli friends, as well as Muslim friends. Don't let a country's politics put you off its people. Remember George W.? And Adolf?

—> *Sometimes it pays to clean up, dept:* First time gettin' the nook in awhile. I gotta clean up the apartment, wash the dishes, hide the scat porn. Last time I did this, moving around 30-year-old dust bunnies gave me awful bronchitis. This time, I wear a mask.

Fuck! I just knocked into a stack of CDs people have sent me over the last half a dozen years. I never listened to them, and now I have to clean them up. Aw well, might as well check out a few.

Holy shit! Two great ones. I can't believe what I was missing.

1. *Alien Dead* demo CD "Cannibal Holocaust!" Hooeeey. horrorcore like you've always wanted it. The music and vocals are so frantic you'll shit. I don't know what else they've got out, but you should find it and get it! Ask 'em at www.myspace.com/aliendead.

2. Pure Country Gold ain't what it sounds like. It actually sounds like lo-fi blues, manicked-out, and played by the Reatards. The name of the band is Pure Country Gold. Contact 'em at myspace.com/purecountrygold. I did.

—> *(Il)legalize this? dept*: The Mt. Shasta Brewing company is located in the tiny town of Weed, California. To promote their beer, the company made bottle caps with the logo "Try Legal Weed."

In the middle of last year, The US Treasury Department of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (what a combination!) said *no*!

They threatened the tiny company with fines and even closing them down. But with the help of the local (Republican) congressman, they fought the Treasury Department *and* the FDA… and won!!! Maybe it was because of the change of administration. Waddaya think?

—> *Beastly and The Beast dept:* The Discovery Channel is suing Amazon over its "Kindle" eBook. The charge? Patent infringement. TDC claims they invented the concept of encrypting a book for digital internet distribution.

Do I support Amazon because they sell my books (barely)? Or do I support TDC because they're "the little guy" in this deal. It's like Tony Alamo and kiddie porn. I hate the victim, but I hate the law more.

Several years ago, Amazon tried to patent "one-click checkout," claiming they had a right to make every other Web site require two clicks to pay for goods. Originally, they got the patent. Later, I think, it was withdrawn.

Now they're getting a taste of their own Prozac. But, right is right, and ideas should not be patentable. Nothing should be. So good luck Amazon, This one, I hope you win.

Another irony: Amazon runs Disco very's online store for them. Only in America can one company sue another, and keep them as a business partner. Yowsah.

—> *Further in the hate the law more dept:* The Supreme Court is going to hear the case of some right-wing PAC that made an anti-Hillary movie. They showed it on television while she was running for president. The movie claimed, among other things, that Hillary was the foremost American spokesperson for European-style socialism. If only it were true! I would have voted for her. In Europe, they have free health care and six-weeks vacation. We wouldn't want that here, would we?

Truth is not the point.

The Hillary-ites said the movie was a violation of the campaign finance rules. The backers of the movie should disclose who they are and how much they contributed.

The moviemakers said it wasn't a campaign, but a movie: free speech and all that. Besides, Michael Moore, a liberal, had a movie that said a lot about GWB. Was that a campaign ad?

I go with the moviemakers. It *is* a matter of free speech. If the anti-Clintonites win this case, you bet your HOPE poster that the Democrats are gonna be making that film about Jeb Bush, or whoever, accusing them of... I donno. We'll just have to wait four years and see.

Violent and chronic boredom, self-persecution, hopeless surroundings

I can feel your collective sighs of disgust at the sight of that column header but I'm back you mutants. I needed a half-dozen-or-so months off from this column while I regained my bearings and did a whole lot of nothing, but now I'm ready to write about hardcore again. With the excusatory melodrama out of the way, bring the mother fuckin' rukkus!

I've been heavily into all that is crusty hardcore lately and the Japanese have dropped two bombs this month. The first,

CLAYSEA's debut 7", *Slave State* (Detonate Records), seems to be wrangling lukewarm reviews via the interweb, but I really dig it. I first spun this EP at the Maxipad and really felt, "eh," about the whole experience, but since I'm a good lil collector boy, I buy every punk record I can that comes out of the land of the rising sun, and had my own copy to test at home. The problem I was having with it on first listen—too thin of a sound to pack the power that this style demands—was given the heave-ho by my 1970s Sherwood S-602. I often have a problem where I have to keep the bass at -10 for a record to sound good, but with this CLAYSEA record all it took was cranking that puppy all the way to -6! Once that was taken care of, this slab began to crush. The sounds on *Slave State* really offer nothing new to the curry, it's pretty standard fare for the genre, but I, personally, think it's hellishly solid. Heavy, mid-paced, pounding, and blown-out crust-core, with a vocalist that trades back and forth between crust-grunts to more of a growl-y scream. As I stated, CLAYSEA is coloring completely within the lines, but to me it's a worthy listen and by no means an insta-file. As a matter of fact, I've probably listened to this eight times in the last two days. Already sold out from the label but I can pretty much guarantee it's still kickin' in many a distro box.

The other Nippon torpedo this month was launched from PDX's Black Water Records in the form of *Warning*, the newest EP from Tokyo's LIFE. The first track, "The Denyed Times," is more of an AMEBIX-styled dredging but the other three tunes on this 7" are full-bore, blistering and frenzied rippers of thrashing crusty hardcore. When "A Distant View" kicks in I just wanna break shit. This 7" is so fucking good. Get it, get it, get it.

****

On the new-bands-you-need-to-check-out tip, Randy and I took the bus to some absolutely crazy show space (this place is a whole column in itself) on the foot of Bernal Heights last night to see N/N, YEAR ONE, TUBERCULOSIS, and RAYOS X. TUBERCULOSIS played first and, along with RAYOS X, is a brand new band of stoked punks from Los Angeles, and this was only their second show ever. Lemme just say that TB fuckin' brought it. Their tunes were a (perfectly) loose take on early Spanish hardcore with pissed-as-hell female vocals. I'm psyched to hear (and see!) more from this band. RAYOS X followed with a similar style of punk, but I must say that (live) I wasn't grabbed as much, and I think that's mostly due to the fact that I sat in the park all day working on my tan, and by that point, was worn-the-fuck-out, and of no fault of the band. Now, RAYOS X had demo tapes available, which I neglected to pick up (insert self-directed "frown" emoticon here, cause…) Randy got one and we listened to at his house after the show and it fucking RIPs (pun intended) and both bands are something exciting to look out for.

In early February I played a few shows in Portland, Seattle, LA, and San Diego that were so much fucking fun. Well, there is a newish band in Portland called NERVESKADE that is channeling a nasty early-RIPCORD-style of blasting hardcore and owning it. We had played a show with them here a few weeks prior, and while they killed at that show, seeing them at home (this show was actually in their living room) in Portland really showcased a different animal. The kids went fucking ape-shit when NERVESKADE played and made for one of the best shows I've been to in ages. These dudes have a couple cassettes out and there is a 7" coming soon on Whisper In Darkness. It will already be underway by the time this sees print, but NERVESKADE is also about to head out on a US tour with MUNDO MUERTO and everyone should most definitely stop by.

Also from the northwest and about to start showing up in random chatter are DETONIZE, from Seattle, and FEAR OF TOMORROW, from Vancouver, BC. I had the great pleasure of seeing FEAR OF TOMORROW's raw hardcore bomb-blast five times and not once were they not on the top of their game. There's a demo out now that I, of course, also forgot to get. DETONIZE is the new vehicle for a couple SANCTUM dudes and play a metallic Scandi-crust style and is super badass and tight as shit. Keep your eyes peeled for their LP, *Rat Dogs of War*.

****

Prerequisite '90s mumbo-jumbo

When's the last time you pulled out your HEALTH HAZARD records? *Fuuuuuck*! If you don't have them, I highly, *highly* urge you to seek this shit out. It's some of the most burly seething, hateful hardcore ever made. The break-neck riffs are fucking relentless, the drums are being fucking hammered to death and Mandy's vocals are to-the-point and ferocious. I'd go as far as to say that HEALTH HAZARD's *Not Just a Nightmare* 7", from '93 is perfectly at home, alongside HIS HERO IS GONE, BORN AGAINST and CITIZENS ARREST in the cannon of essential, ripping hardcore records of the '90s. It's that good, and has, like a fine cheese, improved with age. Prank and Flat Earth did the world a favor by releasing a split Discography with SUFFER, a band that featured 3/4 of HEALTH HAZARD, on CD and LP respectively, a few years back, so hopefully you won't have a hard time finding it.

Next month: a song-by-song adventure through the SACRED SHOCK LP.

Notez:

–Q: Hipster absorbtion of hardcore? A: Live it or fucking leave it!

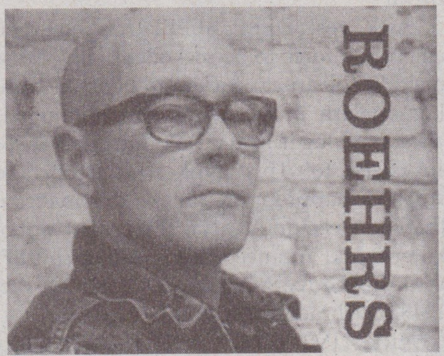
–"Can't face the future / Fear eating into my head / My thoughts are out of control / Pray for release when I'm dead."

–CRUDE SS, RAXOLA, and COLD WORLD, *go!*

–If you're bored you will find these columns here: deadstareforlife.blogspot.com

–Space junk…it don't mean shit!

–Every night before bed I look over at this one-sheet/press release for WARZONE's *Don't Forget the Struggle, Don't Forget the Streets* LP that I have hanging on my wall, that has a picture of Raybees with a word bubble coming out of his mouth, saying, "Yo *this* is New York! (No matter what *MRR* says!)" and I go to bed happy.



KILL THE BUSINESS!

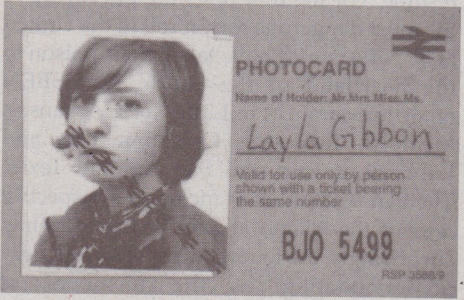
Attention you fucks! News from the Confederacy of Scum headquarters: ANTiSEEN, BEFORE I HANG and JOE BUCK YOURSELF cut an ugly swathe across Texas, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Arkansas and the hinterlands! With Messrs. Clayton and Young at the helm, ANTiSEEN stormed across the southland, adding three new destructo rock locations to their resume. For the first time, the purveyors of the most dangerous rock'n'roll in the United States of America have taken their poison to the heartland of the South. ANTiSEEN made appearances in Little Rock, Arkansas, Memphis Tennessee, Oklahoma City and Lubbock, Austin and San Antonio Texas. The San Antonio stop included a respectful tour of the Alamo at 3am in the morning; surprisingly the federal marshals were very accommodating of the members of ANTiSEEN when they wanted to visit the revered location at such an usual hour.

The band varied their set list from night to night depending on the preponderance of skinheads or Confederacy of Scum mem-

bers. The high point of the tour for this fan may have been Hattiesburg, Mississippi, where local rockers BEFORE I HANG did a spectacular job of opening for ANTiSEEN. Walt, Chris, Joel and company kicked a lot of skinhead butt! This was a fucking amazing set! With the band primed for blood, some of the ANTiSEEN songs witnessed that night were, "Leeches and Losers," "I Don't Ask You for Nothing," "Animals, Eat 'Em," "Spare Change," "Fornication," "Cactus Jack" "Nothing's Cool" "Sabu," "Dear Abbey" "Funk U" Star Whore" "Today Your Love, Tomorrow the World" "Storm Trooper" "Fuck All Y'all," "Death Train," "1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8–I Don't Like You" "Two Headed Dog" (Roky Erikson). In Austin we got a spirited set by BUZZCRUSHER, who summoned up sixteen years of rock'n'roll nastiness. BUZZCRUSHER and BEFORE I HANG are national treasures. When they come your way you need to get off your ass and go see them!

Fuck yes! DEEP SLEEP has emerged again as a force to be reckoned with! These melodic/destructo fucks are bent on turning modern music on its ear! Nothing is clear. Nothing is in sync. Nothing gels as it's supposed to! This punk rock starts and stops at inappropriate times—this makes it that more exciting! This is discordant, out of kilter punk! You need this world of shit EP! Write to Grave Mistake PO Box P.O. Box 12482, Richmond, VA 23241.

Fuck! TIME TO ESCAPE! These maniacs are completely out of touch with reality! Their music is steeped in the juices of Satan and his minions on "The Cost of Living" EP! These cretins howl and leave behind a noisy mess that will make you feel very uncomfortable. TIME TO ESCAPE has accomplished their mission! The fans are extremely uncomfortable now! The five songs on "The Cost of Living" EP all clock in at under two minutes. It does not require a long ballad for TIME TO ESCAPE to make its point! Until next month—I'll be seeing you!!



My last two columns have been part of a trilogy based on the feminine rhythm, the sound of the uterus in rock, this is the third and final chapter, for all the wimmin in the place, throw your hands up in despair. A greatest hitz of women in rock, the mishaps and bad puns, the sexist jokes and bad hair days!

***

1. The Wrecks demo will not be reissued by Grand Theft Audio; the convoluted reason given to this earnest reporter relates to the fact that there are two demo tapes, and a track on an old K! records comp tape! And the songs overlap, and there aren't enough of them! From the mouth of the source of the knowledge! This seems lame to me, like you only are worth of reissue if you have a double-CD's worth of material?? Someone do a 7" discography now! (The Wrecks were an all-girl hardcore band from Nevada in the early/mid '80s, in case you missed my earlier missives)

***

2. Turboslut broke up! I got an excellent letter and package from the mysterious Beck cursing me for mentioning Heavens To Betsy in the same sentence as her band in a previous column! And also for my callous dismissal of their band name. Interview coming up soon! Legend of thee Turboslut! You can get tapes, a tour zine and a split 12" and you probably should. If you wanna hear the sound of doomed turboslutsavedmylife@gmail.com

***

3. After getting the MyDolls CD for review in this issue, I suddenly started thinking about that other early '80s Austin based girl punk band, The Foams. *MRR* has a copy of their only 7", that I currently cannot find of course, but does anyone know what the deal was with this band? Their music is at once charming and sinister, of course they often get compared to The Shaggs, that inept yet confident sound... Do they have anything else? A tape? Need to know! Also need this 7" if you got one weighing you down?!

***

4. Apparently there's a Chalk Circle discography CD in the works, there's an interview with band member Sharon Cheslow in *MRR* #298 that details the history of this early '80s all-girl DC art-punk band, hangin out in Georgetown... Someone should put that out on vinyl too! A helpful human forwarded me this link, which will lead to Sharon Cheslow's list of women in punk between 1975 and 1980! A most magnificent resource for all future girl bands to take notes from, and of course, use as ammunition.
www.mindspring.com/~acheslow/AuntMary/bang/wip.html

5. The Brat, East LA's dreamiest, and the band that define, or rather refine the concept of pop punk also have a discography CD on the way. The picture of them on the cover of the February '82 issue of *Low Rider* magazine is the definition of hip, the band's stance, Teresa's presence... A band that looks as good as they sound, that insinuates they have no depth, which is totally not the case. The lyrics are perceptive, politically aware, managing to capture both the lightness and heaviness of youth! From roller skating to state oppression, with grace and style... I am psyched that they are finally gonna get their due. There's a great interview/retrospective in *Razorcake* #37, which you can still pick up via their website.

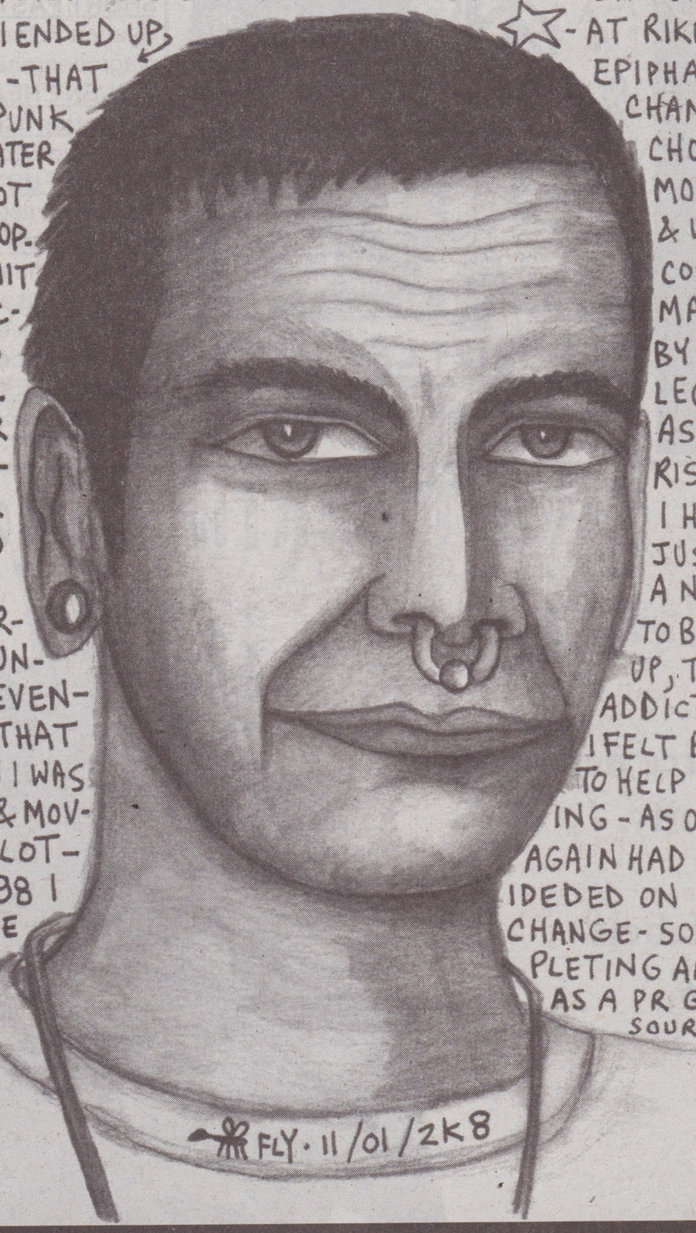
Also! on the *MRR* stereo with alarming frequency is a tape sent in by Héctor of Cintes Podrides featuring Escroto De Rata and Epidemia.... How much do we heart falling apart desperate Spanish punk? An answer is not necessary. I hear La Vida Es Un Mus are involved somehow in future vinyl production so keep your eyes out.
On the web:
whatwewantisfree.blogspot.com
layla@maximumrocknroll.com

You may have noted the back cover; we are working on a new queer punk issue, so if you have an idea for a piece, a secret history, a band you wanna interview, you know the score! The deadline is July 15th. Email or write us!!
Also! T-shirt competition! Design us a new one and a world of punk rock delights will tumble down upon you.
And finally, mark your calendars, 12th-16th of August 2009.
San Francisco's Doooooomed!

And note Cissie's absense? She's haunted by the song "How Much is That Doggie in the Window?" and has been rendered mute as a result..

I WAS BORN IN NEIVA WHICH IS IN THE NORTH OF COLOMBIA - IN 1972 - MY DAD DID "BUSINESS CONSULTING" WHICH TURNED INTO MONEY LAUNDERING FOR THE COLOMBIAN CARTEL - SO WE MOVED AROUND ALOT - IT WAS APPROXIMATELY 1978 WHEN WE MOVED TO THE USA SO MY DAD COULD WORK WITH THE ITALIAN MOB - MY BABYSITTER'S NAME WAS JIMMY - HE HAD A GUN - HE WAS AWESOME - WE LIVED AT FIRST IN QUEENS THEN BROOKLYN & MANHATTAN - THEN WE WENT TO ITALY FOR A WHILE THEN NEW JERSEY, FLORIDA, BACK TO EUROPE, NEW JERSEY, MASSACHUSETTS, CONNECTICUT - THEN I FINALLY TOOK OFF ON MY OWN - IN APPROXIMATELY 1988 - I WENT IMMEDIATELY TO THE LOWER EAST SIDE WHICH WAS PRETTY MUCH THE FIRST TIME I HAD EVER FELT STABILITY OR SECURITY - BEING ON THE STREETS - I MET UP WITH THIS PUNK GUY SPAZ AT A SQUAT OR ROT SHOW & WE MET MARCOS WHO BECAME MY PUNK ROCK DAD & HE TOOK ME IN - HE WAS LIVING AT LUCKY 13 - A SQUAT ON 13th ST. - AFTER A BIT I MET THESE GUYS RICON & SMIGGS WHO BROUGHT ME TO 3BC (ON 3RD BTWN B&C) & I ENDED UP STAYING THERE - THAT WAS THE SCUM PUNK SQUAT - THEN LATER AFTER DOING A LOT OF TRAVELING - HOPPING TRAINS & SHIT I ENDED UP IN C-SQUAT - I HAD MET THIS GIRL & BROUGHT HER BACK WITH ME - OUR DAUGHTER WAS CONCIEVED IN C SQUAT · 15 YEARS AGO DURING A NICE DRUNKEN WINTER EVENING - AROUND THAT TIME WAS WHEN I WAS DRUG DEALING & MOVING AROUND ALOT - THEN IN 97-98 I TOOK A LITTLE VACATION ☆

☆ - AT RIKERS WHERE I HAD AN EPIPHANY TO DO A CARREER CHANGE & BECOME A PSYCHOLOGIST - SO I DID - I MOVED TO CONNECTICUT & WENT TO COLLEGE AFTER COMPLETING MY COURT MANDATED RE-HAB - & BY MY 2ND YEAR OF COLLEGE I STARTED WORKING AS A COUNSELOR TO AT-RISK ADOLESCENTS (AS I HAD ONCE BEEN) - IT JUST SEEMED LIKE SUCH A NATURAL THING FOR ME TO BE TREATING THE FCKT UP, THE DEGENERATES, THE ADDICTS & THE CRIMINALS - I FELT BLESSED BEING ABLE TO HELP PEOPLE OUT FOR A LIVING - AS OF ONE YEAR AGO I ONCE AGAIN HAD AN EPIPHANY & DECIDEDED ON ANOTHER CARREER CHANGE - SO I AM CURRENTLY COMPLETING AN MBA WHILE WORKING AS A PR GUY FOR A HUMAN RESOURCES AGENCY - & OF COURSE I'M STILL BOOKING PUNK SHOWS



Slug - 11/01/2K8 - LES - NYC

I drew this portrait of Slug on the Day of the Dead last year - he was in town with his daughter - who is now a teenager!! - for the Metropolis Apocalypse show in Brooklyn where my band Zero Content played in the closing show on Hallowe'en - I can remember Slug from my first days in the Lower East Side in the late 80's & then after he left in the late 90's I hardly ever saw him - last summer - 2K8 - he organized this massive Punk Island extravaganza on Governor's Island (NYC) - it was crazy!! - there were almost 100 bands playing all day in 10 different sites on the island - of course there was a lot of chaos but I thought it was amazing & I was very impressed with him - & he is doing it all over again this year on June 21st!! - 10 stages - 70 bands - a FREE event held for the purpose of bringing great bands together from all over to play and promote themselves to the true fans of our scene and beyond - check the site for more info: www.makemusicny.org/punkisland - & to contact Fly: fly@peops.org (put MRR in the subject so I know its not spam) - new PEOPs #4 zine is now available!! - hot offa the press & limited edition with some pretty incredible PEOPs - you can find it & other Fly zines such as Dog Dayz at www.microcosmpublishing.com - plus check new websites!! www.peops.org & www.flyspage.com & to snail Fly: PO Box 1318 Cooper Stn NYC NY 10276 (I love snails!!)

¡APESHIT!

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MISS UNIVERSE CALLS GUANTANAMO A LOT OF FUN

Pascal Fletcher for Reuters

A "relaxing, calm, beautiful place" may not be everyone's description of Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where the United States holds about 240 prisoners in a detention center that has drawn condemnation from around the world.

But this was the opinion of reigning Miss Universe Dayana Mendoza of Venezuela, who visited the U.S. naval facility in eastern Cuba this month on a trip organized by the United Service Organizations (USO) which supports U.S. troops.

The Guantanamo Bay base, whose presence Cuba's government has contested as illegal for years, is used by U.S. authorities as a prison camp for foreign terrorism suspects. Critics have condemned it as a symbol of abuses in Washington's war on terrorism launched after the September 11, 2001, attacks.

Caracas-born Mendoza, 22, who visited the facility March 20-25 along with Miss USA Crystle Stewart, 27, enthused about her Guantanamo trip as an "incredible experience" in a blog entry posted on the Miss Universe website dated March 27, 2009.

"It was a loooot of fun!," Mendoza wrote, describing how she and Stewart met U.S. military personnel and took rides around the camp, which is encircled by a barbed-wire fenced, minefields and watchtowers. She said they also visited a bar on the base and the "unbelievable" beach there.

"We visited the Detainees camps and we saw the jails, where they shower, how the(y) recreate themselves with movies, classes of art, books. It was very interesting," she wrote. "I didn't want to leave, it was such a relaxing place, so calm and beautiful," she added.

Former detainees and human rights groups have alleged the use of torture, including "waterboarding" (simulated drowning) and other physical abuses, at the Guantanamo prison.

In a statement, the Miss Universe Organization said Mendoza and Stewart's trip to Guantanamo was part of a longstanding relationship with the USO and its entertainment program "which boosts the morale of U.S. troops."

"Dayana Mendoza's comments on her blog were in reference to the hospitality she received while meeting the members of the U.S. military and their families who are stationed in Guantanamo," Miss Universe Organization President Paula M. Shugart said in the statement. "We will continue to show our appreciation and express our gratitude to the military personnel who serve our nation," Shugart said.

Recounting her "memorable" trip, Mendoza, who was crowned Miss Universe 2008 in Vietnam, said: "We also met the Military dogs, and they did a very nice demonstration of their skills. All the guys from the Army were amazing with us."

Britain announced last week it would investigate whether members of its secret services were complicit in the torture of a British resident released from Guantanamo Bay last month.

Spanish prosecutors may decide this week whether to start an investigation of six former officials from George W. Bush's administration in connection with the torture of Guantanamo detainees.

In one of his first acts in office, U.S. President Barack Obama set a one-year deadline for shutting the prison. The Pentagon said last month it had received renewed reports of prisoner abuse during a recent review of conditions at Guantanamo, but had concluded that all prisoners were being kept in accordance with the Geneva Conventions.

IRISH WOMEN CHALLENGE BAN ON ABORTION

From an article in the Irish Times by Carl O'Brien

The Government is to launch a robust defense of the State's ban on abortion before the European Court of Human Rights in the face of a legal challenge by three women who claim the restrictions violate their human rights.

The Strasbourg based court is considering the admissibility of a legal challenge by the women, who claim their rights were denied by being forced to terminate their pregnancies outside the State. The women say the restrictive nature of Irish law on abortion jeopardized their health and wellbeing. The identities of the three, known as A, B and C – will remain confidential as the case proceeds through the court. While it has been known for some time that the case is pending, papers lodged with the court show in detail for the first time how the Government will contest the case. The main plank of its defense rests on its contention that domestic legal remedies have not been exhausted by the women. It also robustly challenges suggestions by the women that there is a lack of post-abortion care or counseling in Ireland. It also insists the European Convention on Human Rights does not confer even a limited right to abortion and it would be "inconceivable" that member states would have agreed to this.

The women at the centre of the legal challenge include a woman who ran the risk of an ectopic pregnancy, where the fetus develops outside the womb; a woman who received chemotherapy for cancer; and a woman whose children were placed in care as she was unable to cope. The court, which is separate from the EU, adjudicates on human rights issues among all 47 member states of the Council of Europe. Any decision of the court is binding on the member states and must be complied with, except if it consists of an advisory opinion. The women's complaints centre on four alleged violations of articles in the European Convention on Human Rights, including protection from "inhuman or degrading treatment" and freedom from discrimination.

The women at the centre of the case – who are represented by the Irish Family Planning Association – say the lack of any effective remedy at home means they have satisfied the requirement to exhaust domestic legal remedies. In addition, they say that taking a case would have been costly, futile and could have forced them to relinquish their anonymity. While the case has passed the first stage of the hearing process, a formal hearing on the admissibility and merits of the case is expected shortly. The case will be watched closely by observers given a ruling by the same court in recent years which resulted in Poland being instructed to guarantee access to legal abortions.

87,215 IRAQIS DEAD SINCE 2005

Kim Gamel, Associated Press

BAGHDAD – Iraq's government has recorded 87,215 of its citizens killed since 2005 in violence ranging from catastrophic bombings to execution-style slayings, according to government statistics obtained by The Associated Press that break open one of the most closely guarded secrets of the war. Combined with tallies based on hospital sources and media reports since the beginning of the war and an in-depth review of available evidence by The Associated Press, the figures show that more than 110,600 Iraqis have died in violence since the 2003 US-led invasion.

The number is a minimum count of violent deaths. The official who provided the data to the AP, on condition of anonymity because of its sensitivity, estimated the actual number of deaths at 10 to 20 percent higher because of thousands who are still missing and civilians who were buried in the chaos of war without official records.

The Health Ministry has tallied death certificates since 2005, and late that year the United Nations began using them — along with hospital and morgue figures — to publicly release casualty counts. But by early 2007, when sectarian violence was putting political pressure on the US and Iraqi governments, the Iraqi numbers disappeared. The United Nations "repeatedly asked for that cooperation" to resume but never received a response, U.N. associate spokesman Farhan Haq said Thursday.

The data obtained by the AP measure only violent deaths — people killed in attacks such as the shootings, bombings, mortar attacks and beheadings that have ravaged Iraq. It excluded indirect factors such as damage to infrastructure, health care and stress that caused thousands more to die.

Authoritative statistics for 2003 and 2004 do not exist. But Iraq Body Count, a private, British-based group, has tallied civilian deaths from media reports and other sources since the war's start. The AP reviewed the Iraq Body Count analysis and confirmed its conclusions by sifting the data and consulting experts. The AP also interviewed experts involved with previous studies, prominent Iraq analysts and provincial and medical officials to determine that the new tally was credible.

The AP also added its own tabulation of deaths since Feb. 28, the last date in the Health Ministry count. The three figures add up to more than 110,600 Iraqis who have died in the war. That total generally coincides with the trends reported by reputable surveys, which have been compiled either by tallying deaths reported by international journalists, or by surveying samplings of Iraqi households and extrapolating the numbers. Iraq Body Count's estimate of deaths since the start of the war, excluding police and soldiers, is a range — between 91,466 and 99,861.

The numbers show just how traumatic the war has been for Iraq. In a nation of 29 million people, the deaths represent 0.38 percent of the population. Proportionally, that would be like the United States losing 1.2 million people to violence in the four-year period; about 17,000 people are murdered every year in the US

Security has improved since the worst years, but almost every person in Iraq has been touched by the violence. "We have lost everything," said Badriya Abbas Jabbar, 54. A 2007 truck bombing targeting a market near her Baghdad home killed three granddaughters, a son and a niece.

North of the capital in the city of Baqouba, a mother shrouded in black calls to her three sons from her doorstep. She calls out as if they were alive, but they were killed in April 2007, when Shiite Muslim militiamen barged into their auto parts store and gunned them down because they were Sunni.

The Health Ministry figures indicate such violence was tremendously deadly. Of the 87,215 deaths, 59,957 came in 2006 and 2007, when sectarian attacks soared and death squads roamed the streets. The period was marked by catastrophic bombings and execution-style killings. Quantifying the loss has always been difficult. Records were not always compiled centrally, and the brutal insurgency sharply limited on-the-scene reporting. The US military never shared its data.

The Health Ministry was always at the forefront of counting deaths. Under Saddam Hussein, it compiled casualty figures even as US troops closed in on Baghdad, though it later abandoned that effort. It has started up again in fits, and finally began reliable record-keeping at the start of 2005. Those data were provided to the AP in the form of a two-page computer printout listing yearly totals for death certificates issued for violent deaths by hospitals and morgues between Jan. 1, 2005, and Feb. 28, 2009. The ministry does not have figures for the first two years of the war because it was devastated in the aftermath of the invasion, the official said.

Experts said the count constitutes an important baseline, albeit an incomplete one. Richard Brennan, who has done mortality research in Congo and Kosovo, said it is likely a "gross underestimate" because many deaths go unrecorded in war zones. The Iraqi Body Count numbers are likely even more incomplete, given that many killings occurred in incidents journalists were unaware of or in inaccessible areas. Mass graves have been turning up as improved security allows patrols in formerly off-limits areas, but how many remain will never be known.

The death toll in Iraq has been a hotly disputed subject because of the high political stakes in a war opposed by many countries and by a large portion of the American public. Critics on each side accuse the other of manipulating the death numbers to sway opinion. While the Pentagon maintains meticulous records of the number of American troops killed — at least 4,275 as of Thursday — it does not publicly release comprehensive Iraqi casualty figures. American units around the country do compile figures, drawing them mostly from the Iraqi military. They are not released publicly but are used to determine trends, according to Lt. Col. Mark Ballesteros, a US spokesman in Baghdad.

The AP has filed Freedom of Information Act requests since 2005 seeking that data, but has not received it. The US policy to not fully address civilian deaths has drawn heavy criticism from human rights groups. "We believe that all warring parties have a duty to keep information on casualties," said Sarah Leah Whitson of Human Rights Watch in New York. "It's one of many factors one needs to analyze compliance with international humanitarian law."

The AP has tried since the first days of the war to understand how many Iraqis were being killed.In 2003, AP journalists traveled across Iraq to search hospital records for civilian deaths during the first chaotic month of the invasion. They found that at least 3,240 civilians died that month, including 1,896 in Baghdad, but acknowledged that number was a fraction of the total because record-keeping often fell victim to the bloodshed. Beginning in May 2005, the AP has tracked war-related casualties as reported by police, hospital and government officials, mosque workers and verifiable witness accounts, breaking down the victims into civilians, soldiers and police. That tally has reached 46,065, including 37,205 civilians, but also underrepresents the true casualty number because many killings go unreported, especially in more remote areas. Those numbers rose significantly on Thursday with two suicide attacks that killed dozens of

people.

There are other clues to the death toll, such as the number of people buried at the main Shiite cemetery in the holy city of Najaf. But even there, the deaths are limited mostly to Shiites and include natural as well as violent causes, so they cannot be considered definitive. The director of the cemetery's statistics office, Ammar al-Ithari, said the number of burials jumped from just over 32,000 in 2004 and 2005 to nearly 50,000 in 2006 and 54,000 in 2007. It fell to nearly 40,000 last year, as violence declined. There are no statistics from before the war because records were destroyed in the fighting.

The Iraqi official who provided the Health Ministry figures expressed confidence in its count. He said local authorities consistently reported on violence throughout the war, and that the ministry accurately compiled their reports. He also defended death certificates as an instrument, because relatives need them to bury a body in most cemeteries, as well as for inheritance and compensation purposes. He acknowledged some slain insurgents could be included in the count but said he believed that number was low because few insurgents went to hospitals for treatment out of fear of detection, and many insurgent groups buried their own fighters without getting death certificates.

Some experts say casualty tallies based on media reports are inaccurate, because too many deaths go unreported. Some favor cluster surveys, in which conclusions are drawn from a select sampling of households. The largest cluster survey in Iraq was conducted in 2007 by the World Health Organization and the Iraqi government. It concluded that about 151,000 Iraqis had died from violence in the 2003-05 period, but that included insurgents.

A more controversial cluster study conducted between May and July 2006 by Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore and Al-Mustansiriya University in Baghdad, published in the Lancet medical journal, estimated that 601,027 Iraqis had died due to violence. The authors said roughly 50,000 more died from nonviolent causes such as heart disease and cancer because of deteriorating health conditions caused by the war.

Critics argue that such surveys are flawed in Iraq because the security situation prevents a proper sampling. They also have margins of error that could skew the numbers by the tens of thousands. And whatever the number, the ultimate goal is to find ways to reduce it in future conflicts. "The loss of life among those caught up in conflict is tragic whatever the numbers reported," said Gilbert Burnham, one of authors of the Lancet survey. "And finding approaches which will reduce these deaths is of great importance."

RICE APPROVED TORTURE METHODS

Taken from Al Jazeera.net

Condoleezza Rice, the former US secretary of state, approved the use of torture methods such as waterboarding as early as 2002, a new report says. A US senate intelligence committee report said on Wednesday that Rice, then national security adviser, verbally gave the green light to the CIA in July 2002 to use waterboarding on Abu Zubaydah, an al-Qaeda suspect held in Guantanamo Bay in Cuba. A few days later on August 1, 2002, the then US justice department approved the use of waterboarding in a secret memo, the report said. Abu Zubaydah underwent waterboarding at least 83 times in August 2002, according to memos from the administration of George Bush released earlier this week.

The news comes as the senate armed services committee had its own report declassified earlier this week, in which it said senior US officials in the Bush administration were involved in the approval of the use of torture on so-called terror suspects. Both reports follow the release of internal Bush administration legal memos by Barack Obama, the US president, that justified the use of torture by the CIA, a move that has sparked a wave of controversy in the US over the use of torture on detainees. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed was reportedly

waterboarded 183 times

The memos document in detail techniques lawyers believed would not break laws against torture including waterboarding, the repeated slamming of a prisoner's head against a padded wall, face-slapping and sleep deprivation. Robert Gates, the US defense secretary, said the scale of the revelations in the memos and reports had left him concerned about a potential backlash against US forces overseas. "I...was quite concerned, as you might expect, with a potential backlash in the Middle East and in the theaters where we're involved in conflict," he said. "There was the realization in the discussions that some of these disclosures could be used by al-Qaeda and our adversaries," Gates added but said that keeping the contents of the documents secret was "unrealistic".

The senate intelligence report, which compiles legal advice provided by the Bush administration to the CIA, says Rice personally conveyed the administration's approval to waterboard Zubaydah, a so-called high-value detainee, to George Tenet, then director of the CIA. It also shows that dissenting legal views about the severe interrogation methods were brushed aside repeatedly. The new timeline in the intelligence committee report indicates that Rice, then reporting to Bush, played a greater role than she has previously acknowledged last year in written testimony to the senate armed services committee.

Rice told the armed services committee last year that she had attended meetings where the CIA's requests over interrogation techniques were discussed, but said she did not recall details and did not refer to her reported direct role in approving the program in her written statement to the committee.

Zubaydah underwent waterboarding at least 83 times in August 2002, far more than the agency had originally admitted, while Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the alleged mastermind of the September 11 attacks in 2001, was waterboarded 183 times in March 2003, one of the memos released earlier this week said.

Some critics have accused Obama of undermining the US intelligence community after he ordered the release of "top secret" memos on interrogation techniques that have largely been condemned as torture. And last week Dennis Blair, Obama's own most senior intelligence official, said in a memo leaked to the Associated Press news agency that "high value information" was obtained through the use of such harsh techniques. But on Tuesday, in a written statement, Blair said the information gained from the techniques "was valuable in some instances, but there is no way of knowing whether the same information could have been obtained through other means."

Obama has defended the decision to release the memos and has reassurred CIA employees that they will not face any punitive action from the government. However, earlier this week he left the door open to the possibility that those who drafted the memos approving the tactics could be prosecuted, saying that it was up to Eric Holder, the US attorney-general, who has condemned waterboarding as torture, whether to press charges. Obama also said that he would support a congressional investigation over the issue if it were conducted in a bipartisan manner.

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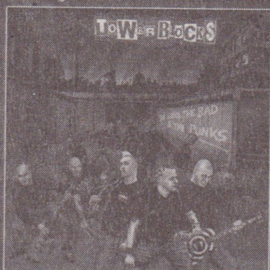

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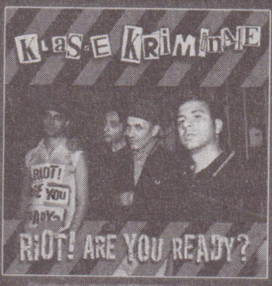

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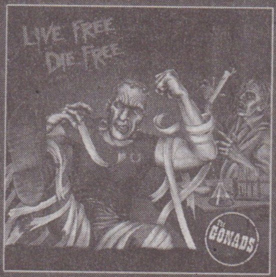

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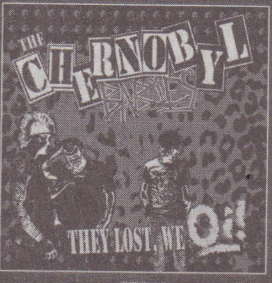

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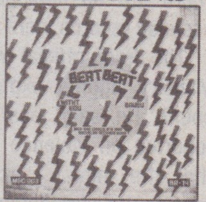

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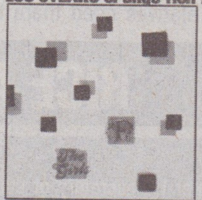

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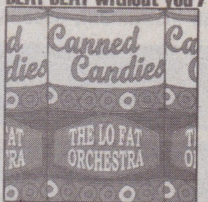

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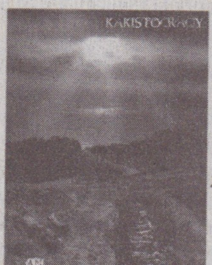

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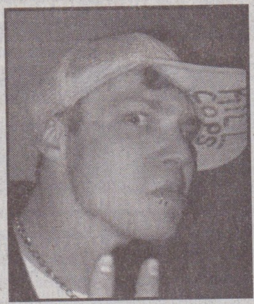
WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

This month's question: If you had just 24 hours left in the Bay Area, what would you do? (asked at the last minute)

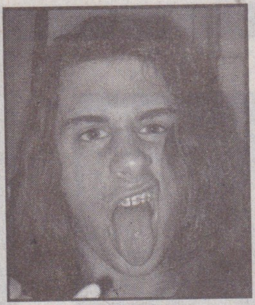
Chris, 23, San Francisco
Drink a forty and ride my bike all day.

Jacob, 22, Oakland
Explore the abandoned train station in West Oakland.

Lydia, 18, Nowhere
Find myself enough money to buy myself a burrito.



Krackamaya, 26, Rohnert Park
If I had 24 hours left in the Bay Area, I would probably give Sammy Towne his jacket back.



Jack, 15, Berkeley
I would get really drunk and really high and go to as many shows as I could in that day.

Margot, 36, Martinez
Skydive.

Ashley, 18, Oakland
Go see the murals,

Tim, 30, Oakland
Marble's hard to burn down, but I'd hire a bunch of punks with a bunch of sledge-hammers and demolish the Mormon temple in East Oakland.

Jesse, 24, San Francisco
Go to the Tenderloin, smoke some crack, do some crime, get on the plane.

Scotty, 22, Oakland
Go down to Telegraph and kill every motherfucking person that hasn't showered today.

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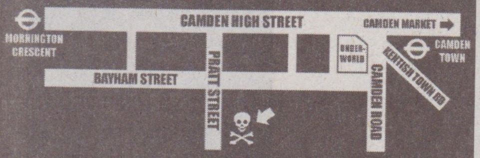

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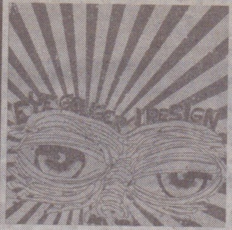

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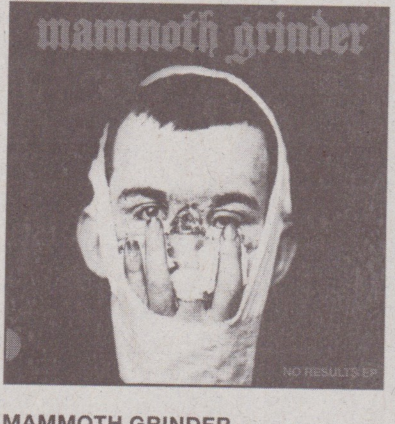

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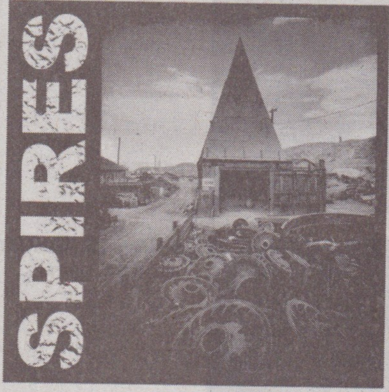

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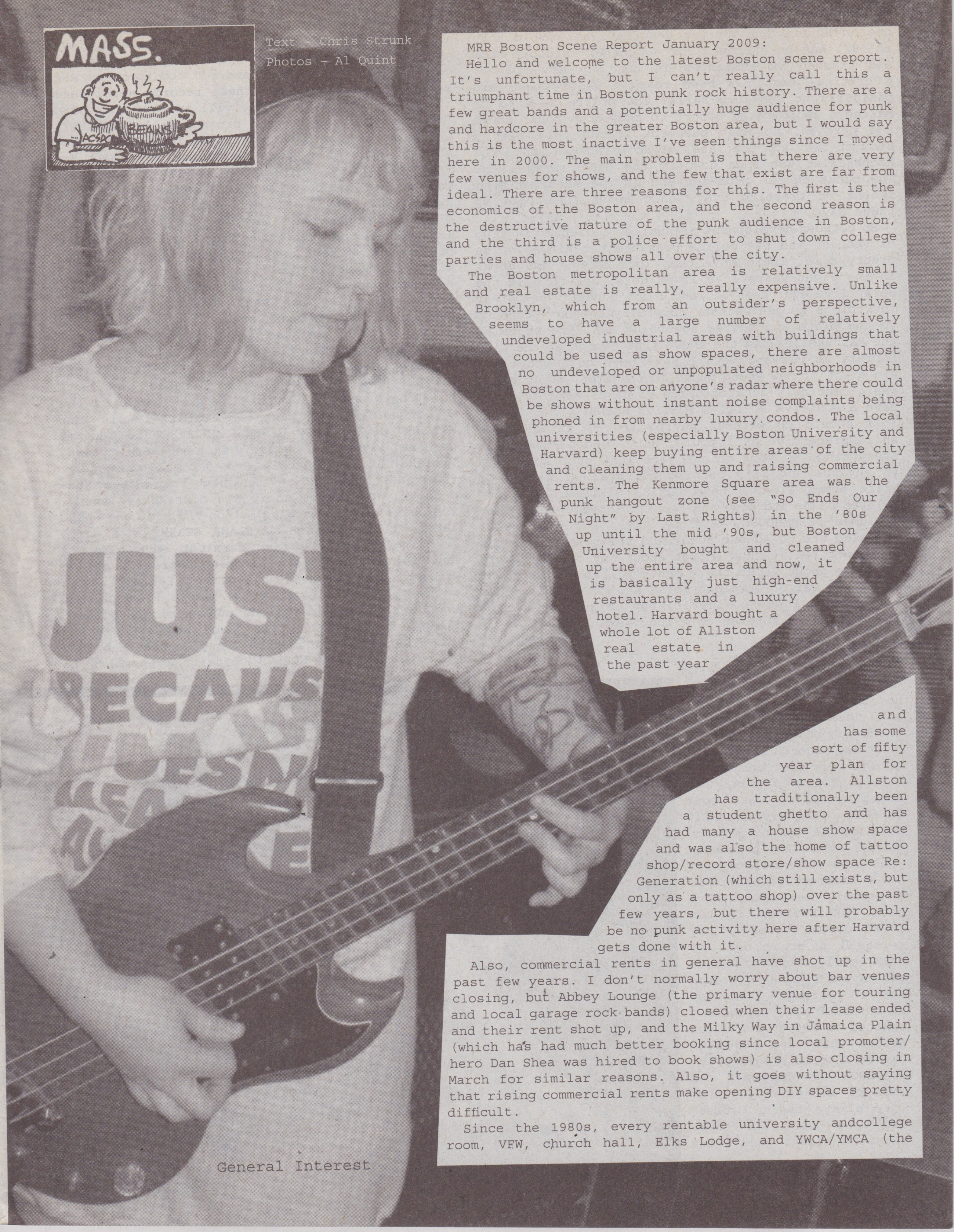


MRR Boston Scene Report January 2009:

Hello and welcome to the latest Boston scene report. It's unfortunate, but I can't really call this a triumphant time in Boston punk rock history. There are a few great bands and a potentially huge audience for punk and hardcore in the greater Boston area, but I would say this is the most inactive I've seen things since I moved here in 2000. The main problem is that there are very few venues for shows, and the few that exist are far from ideal. There are three reasons for this. The first is the economics of the Boston area, and the second reason is the destructive nature of the punk audience in Boston, and the third is a police effort to shut down college parties and house shows all over the city.

The Boston metropolitan area is relatively small and real estate is really, really expensive. Unlike Brooklyn, which from an outsider's perspective, seems to have a large number of relatively undeveloped industrial areas with buildings that could be used as show spaces, there are almost no undeveloped or unpopulated neighborhoods in Boston that are on anyone's radar where there could be shows without instant noise complaints being phoned in from nearby luxury condos. The local universities (especially Boston University and Harvard) keep buying entire areas of the city and cleaning them up and raising commercial rents. The Kenmore Square area was the punk hangout zone (see "So Ends Our Night" by Last Rights) in the '80s up until the mid '90s, but Boston University bought and cleaned up the entire area and now, it is basically just high-end restaurants and a luxury hotel. Harvard bought a whole lot of Allston real estate in the past year and has some sort of fifty year plan for the area. Allston has traditionally been a student ghetto and has had many a house show space and was also the home of tattoo shop/record store/show space Re: Generation (which still exists, but only as a tattoo shop) over the past few years, but there will probably be no punk activity here after Harvard gets done with it.

Also, commercial rents in general have shot up in the past few years. I don't normally worry about bar venues closing, but Abbey Lounge (the primary venue for touring and local garage rock bands) closed when their lease ended and their rent shot up, and the Milky Way in Jamaica Plain (which has had much better booking since local promoter/hero Dan Shea was hired to book shows) is also closing in March for similar reasons. Also, it goes without saying that rising commercial rents make opening DIY spaces pretty difficult.

Since the 1980s, every rentable university andcollege room, VFW, church hall, Elks Lodge, and YWCA/YMCA (the

one on Huntingdon Ave was destroyed at a Void show in '82) has been rented for a punk or hardcore show and trashed by audiences in one way or another. A critical mass has been reached where there are basically no rentable halls. The police seem to be making a coordinated effort to shut down house shows and parties, so most basement spaces only last a show or two, and the late, great warehouse space the Rathskeller was shut down by the punks themselves. The punks on the crustier end of the spectrum seem intent on trashing every show space that pops up these days.

So between development pressures, audience trashing of venues, and the police pressure the situation is pretty dire. There have been lots of ups and downs in the eight years I've lived here, but this is the worst I've ever seen it, and I don't really see a way for things to get better. Hopefully someone steps up to the plate and figures something out. The shows at the Rathskeller and the shows that happen at the Zine Library in Harvard Square have been huge and there are a lot of new young punks in the area, so if there was a centrally located place to have shows we could have a POSITIVE POSITIVE POSTIVE SCENE!!

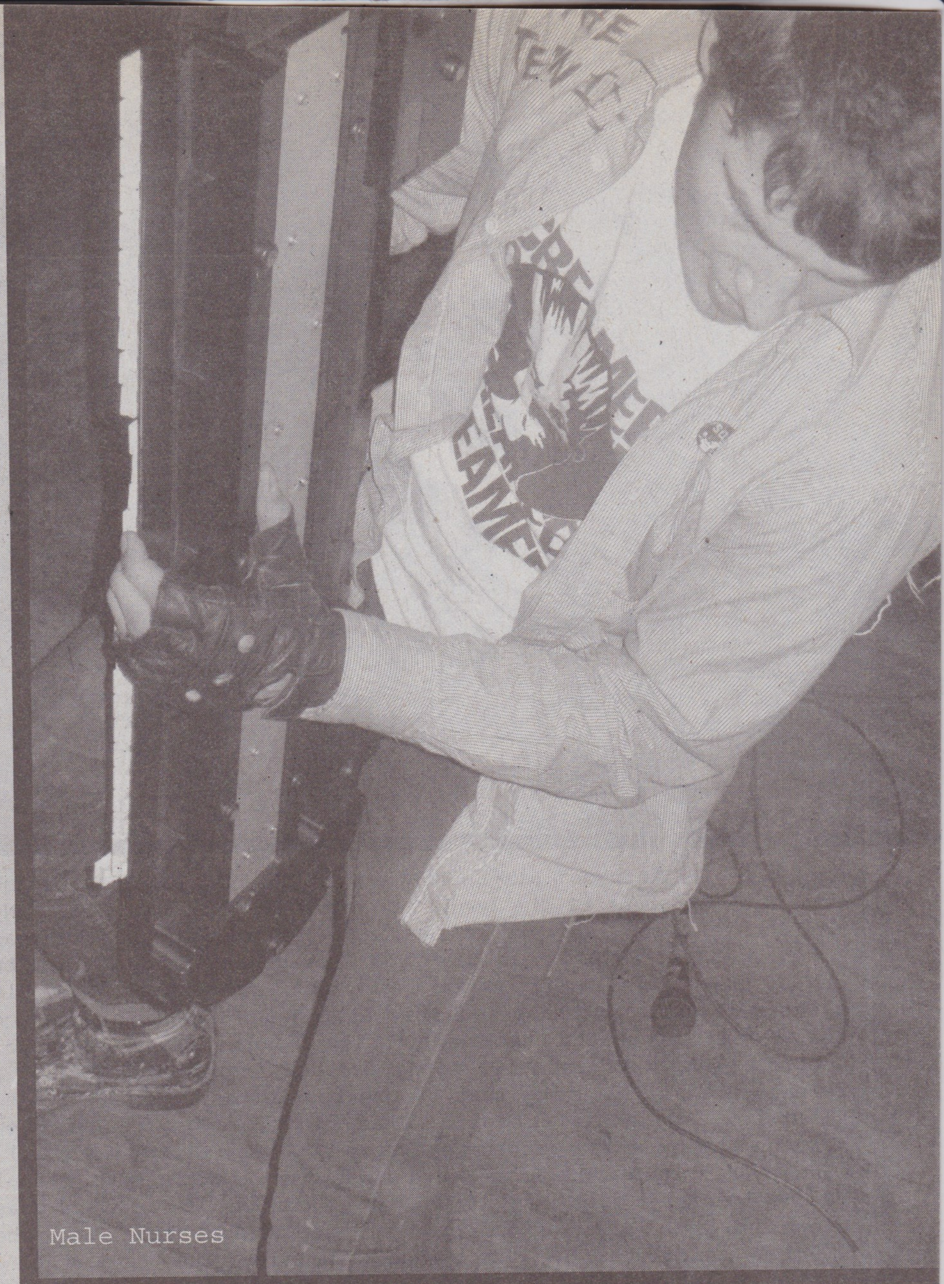
It should go without saying that I tried to be as comprehensive as I could, but I don't know about everything, so some things were left out. Apologies in advance and it's nothing personal. I wanted to write about SINALOA, and DANIEL STRIPED TIGER and related bands and also the Franklin Street scene that includes DREAMHOUSE, GOAT OF ARMS, and ERGOT ROT, and also the HO-AG sub scene and their related bands but don't really know enough about any of that stuff to write about it at the moment. I also just sort of steered clear of straight noise and metal this time, not because I don't like it, but to just keep this from taking me forever to write. Next time!

DA PUNX:

SOCIAL CIRCKLE is one of the better-known local bands nationally. If you don't know them you should really check out both of their 7"s on No Way Records if you like catchy punk that borders on being hardcore. They are doing an East Coast tour in early February and will have an LP coming out on No Way soon. They have been much less active since Matt moved to Brooklyn, which is a bummer. He should move back. BRAINKILLER is our local d-beat heroes. They released a great demo of dark, evil, churning D-beat and have a 7" slated to come out on Deranged Records. BRAINKILLER also released a limited to 100 8" lathe cut record that came and went before I could snag a copy. SCAPEGOAT is Boston's own gods of neo-powerviolence. They always had a Crossed Out vibe going for them, and were always great, but recently have become a total overwhelming live powerhouse. They have 7", and supposedly an LP coming out, on Painkiller and a 7" coming out on RSR records in Germany, but these records never seem to surface. Hopefully they will surface soon. Ban from SCAPEGOAT has a side project called ANXIETY, which he sings and plays all the instruments for. ANXIETY kind of reminds me of early RUPTURE and ELECTRO HIPPIES. There is an ANXIETY 12" EP about to come out on Social Napalm records. Pop punkers THE CLOSET FAIRIES are still going despite some drummer change ups. Singer/guitarist Matt Spent is a top-notch pop songwriter, and the FAIRIES best songs (like "Cassandra" and "Ghetto Girls") will get stuck in your head for days. They have a self-released 7", a 7" on Art of the Underground, and a split 7" with PARTY GARBAGE on Kiss of Death records. They are one of my favorite local bands. Closely related to CLOSET FAIRIES is a newer pop punk band called STRONG REACTION, which features Jeff and Mark from CLOSET FAIRIES and WITCHES WITH DICKS. I haven't heard them yet, but I have been told that they are similar to the Dillinger Four pop punk vibes of their old band WITCHES WITH DICKS. GENERAL INTEREST is another personal favorite. Musically they have a Minutemen, Proletariat, and Really Red derived sound, but the vocal stylings of man-about-town Steve Shea definitely give them their own distinctive sound. They have a 12" EP coming out on the Ride the Snake label in a few months. BLANK STARE is a dirty sounding, blazingly fast straight edge hardcore band. They completed a European tour this summer and have a new LP available on Nick Barren's Third Party Records. LIBYANS is a female fronted band who dwell somewhere on the punk/hardcore border. They've toured three times, and have two 7"s and an LP. Their new 7" called Crash Course is highly recommended. MALE NURSES contains ex-members of

Brainkiller

the late, great CIVIL CRISIS and play fast '82 style hardcore. They have a demo tape and have been playing a lot lately. LIKE RATS (ex-CONVERSIONS and HAND OF GLORY) play basic mid-tempo hardcore and have a demo tape and plans to release a 7". BONE ZONE play great, fast, quirky hardcore with lots of off-time Minutemen-ish touches. They have a demo from an older line up when they had a drum machine, but they are a lot better than that these days. They plan on releasing 2 EPs, a split EP with Worchester's THE TERRIBLES and a DVD in 2009. The can be reached at pearchingonthebeam.com. RED THREAD is an all-female snotty punk band that is still active, but I haven't heard of them playing a show in awhile. They had a 7" released on Dan Barke's (drummer of LIBYANS) Shock to the System Records somewhat recently. They are going to have a split 7" with Washington DC's TURBOSLUT and have plans to tour the West Coast this summer. DRY HUMP (genius name) is a newer band from just north of Boston that contains ex-members of SOLITARY NEGLECT and FULL SCALE ASSAULT. They have a demo, which is great Cleveland-inspired hardcore with one long dirge right in the middle of the tape. GET LAID is a newer Dischord-ish sounding band (Revolution Summer era) that is currently on tour and has a self released 7" coming out. SHIT SHOW is a newer ska influenced punk band that has been playing shows around town and is recording soon. RAMMING SPEED is on the speed metal/crossover tip and has toured the US twice and is heading to Europe in the spring. They just self-released their first CD on their own Teenage Disco Bloodbath records and have splits with ANS and BATTLEMASTER coming out. SERIOUS GENIUSES has a full length on Kiss of Death records, plays ARCHERS OF LOAF influenced pop punk, and has recently toured. FRUIT SALAD is still going. PLANNED COMMUNITES, HOME ALONE, and NO ILLUSIONS are all up and coming straightforward North Shore punk bands who all have plans to do records. It also should be noted that there are at least twelve (my roommate and I counted the other day) new punk bands almost ready to play shows, but they'll have to be included next time after they actually surface. Some of these bands practice in my basement and are really good. I'm looking forward to their musical careers.



Male Nurses

THE NEW SCENE:

Here is Luke DeDeus, the guitarist from Waste Management and Men's Interest with an update on what is going on with the Boston-area bands that revolve around Painkiller Records:

"All the bands seem to be in a writing phase right now. WASTE MANAGEMENT, RAMPAGE, and MEN'S INTEREST are all working on new records; formats and labels yet to be determined. MIND ERASER has two new records out: a 12" on Clean Plate, and a 7" on Young Blood. RIVAL MOB has finished up a 7" for Lockin Out Records and is playing out a lot these days. FREE SPIRIT is a new band with members of WASTE MANAGEMENT and STEP FORWARD with youngster Gil Sayfan on vox. This band is very inspired by the NYC MAYHEM/STRAIGHT AHEAD family and has a demo out and has played one show. The NO TOLERANCE demo is out now as well—hard edged hardcore in the vein of CONFRONT, HEAD FIRST, and BROTHER HOOD. NO TOLERANCE has members of MIND ERASER and RIVAL MOB. As for BREATHING FIRE, they remain mysterious, yet sick. They played a juggernaut of a set at the WALLS show at Harvard and then faded back into the tides of New Bedford, as is their style. Their LP is available on Painkiller. MENTALLY CHALLENGED (solo project of CC from MIND ERASER) has released two 7"s in the past year and has plans to record more, but no show plans"

Thanks, Luke!

GARAGE PUNK:

We are all mourning the TURPENTINE BROTHERS decision to move away from Boston, but we wish them well. They are such a great band and unfortunately do not reside here anymore. They have a 7" that should be out shortly or just came out on Chicago's

Libyans

in some bossa nova touches and has a wonderful new CD out on Darla Records. THE POPPIES who are somewhat of a side project with members of PANTS YELL! and REPORTS still play occasionally. THE WINDY SMILES no longer pay because Ben moved to Las Vegas. NEEDY VISIONS is relative new to the local indie pop scene and features local hero and show booker Dan Shea, and a kind of country tinged indie-pop sound.

OTHER KINDS OF MUSIC SORT OF RELATED TO PUNK:

HEATHEN SHAME is arguably the punkest band in the city. They have no songs, no drums, their music is fully improvised, and their instrumentation is just two guitars and a trumpet, but they play with the intensity of a hardcore band and their shows are wild. The last one I saw featured the audience throwing chairs and a pedal board thrown into the audience. They shred ear drums every time they play. Free noise! Wayne and Kate from HEATHEN SHAME run the Twisted Village record store in Harvard Square and also play in the psychedelic rock monster the MAJOR STARS who have been a long running favorite of mine. They have released a ton of records over the years. Their last one was the Mirror/ Messenger LP on Drag City Records. They have been less active lately since their singer moved to Chicago, but are playing some shows soon. Dave from MAJOR STARS also has a long running band called LIFE PARTNERS who are a really hard to describe collision of classic rock, punk, lounge rock and a lot of other stuff. They have a CD on Twisted Village, a self released LP, and a new 7" on Ride the Snake. BABA YAGA is a psychedelic folk duo that makes gorgeous music with an autoharp, vocals, and acoustic guitars. They have records coming out sometime in the future.

Since the mid '90s, a group of musicians in Boston has been working away on a distinctive and very local form of quiet improvisation that is sometimes referred to as "lower case sound." If you are an adventurous music listener, and put in the time, this stuff can be a rewarding listen. I would recommend checking out musicians and bands such as NMPERIGN, UNDR QUARTET, DAVE GROSS, VIC RAWLINGS, GREG KELLY, BRENDAN MURRAY (more on the drone side of things) BHOB RAINY, HOWARD STELZER, JOSH JEFFERSON, THE HUMAN HAIRS, DUCK THAT!, and many others. Shows of this kind seem to happen mostly at the Outpost art gallery in Inman Square, Moebius Gallery in the South End, the Piano Factory in the South End, Third Life Yoga studio in Union Square, and various other places around the city. The Non-Event concert

Shit Sandwich Records. Zack, who was in TURPENTINE BROTHERS did not move with the rest of the band, has a new band called WHITE MAN'S MAGIC that I look forward to hearing. They are about to release a demo. BLACK CLOUDS is mostly from Providence, Rhode Island but one of them lives in Boston, so I can write about them. They play great dual guitar/no bass pounding CHEATER SLICKS-ish garage rock that I would recommend checking out. They have a 7"out on Baby Doll Records. TAMP-OFFS is still going and Joe from the TAMP-OFFS is responsible for bringing most of the touring bands in this scene to Boston, so hats off to him. Their sound is garage punk, but more on the punk side of the spectrum. TUNNEL OF LOVE is still a band even though I haven't heard much from them lately. I would recommend seeing them live if you have a chance. They have a great blown-out sound kind of indebted to the CRAMPS. Their live show involves loincloths and lots of good stupidity. They have an LP on Bodies of Water Arts and Crafts Records and a couple 7"s out. THE KONKS have a stand up drummer and a basic garage rock sound with a bit of psych and blues thrown in also. Newcomers to this scene are the HOSPITAL RATS and the THICK SHAKES. HOSPITAL RATS' sound is very organ driven and they have been playing a wide variety of shows lately: THICK SHAKES is in the sloppy KINGSMEN vein. As I mentioned before, Boston garage rock definitely suffered a major blow when the Abbey Lounge in Cambridge closed. Some shows have been happening at O'Brians (a bar in Allston) and at the Church (a bar in the Fenway), but I don't think anyone knows anything about a more regular venue yet.

INDIE-POP:

Boston's leading indie-pop band would have to be the great PANTS YELL!, who has a large international indie-pop following. Andrew Churchman (singer/guitarist in PANTS YELL!) is a man who knows how to write a gorgeous garage pop song. They have 7"s available on the Paper Cities label and did two full lengths on Soft Abuse Records and will have a LP on Slumberland at some point in the future. REPORTS is a wonderful noisy guitar pop band that finally has a steady line up after years of musical chairs. I highly recommend this band (full disclosure: I'm helping to release a 7" by them) and you should check out their LP on Paper Cities, which also available for free download on the Inman Street Records website. PONIES IN THE SURF is a brother/sister indie-pop duo who throw

promotion group (nonevent.org) and the Semata productions company (semataproductions.com) set up most of these shows.

NEPTUNE is a long running Boston institution and has been playing in one form or another since the early '90s. All of their instruments are sculpted out of scrap metal by guitarist/vocalist/songwriter Jason Sanford and they play great clangy post punk in the vein of THIS HEAT. Their last LP, *Gong Lake*, came out on Table of the Elements Records. They are one of the hardest working bands I know of and are recording and touring constantly. On a good night they are the best live band in the world. Jon Manson, who is formerly the drummer in Neptune now plays in a synth/art rock band called MAGIC PEOPLE who have toured Europe twice, play around town regularly, and are self-releasing a new LP on their own Mister Records label. RED HORSE has existed for a few years, but has only been playing out regularly in the past year or two. This is a high-energy free improv duo with Steve Pyne on guitar and electronics and the human whirlwind, Eli Keszler, on drums. They are an incredible live band and it's just kind of hard to believe that you are watching something so intense. So far they have only released a limited-to-50 CDR, but have plans to self-release an LP soon. I predict that when they start releasing records they will go on to a level of LIGHTNING BOLT popularity.

RECORD STORES:

There really isn't a record store in Boston where you can buy new punk records. The chain Newbury Comics actually does the best job of any local store of keeping up with new punk records. There are a fair number of great record stores here, though. In Your Ear on Commonwealth Avenue in Allston has a rare punk box that has turned up many treasures over the years, and it is a great used record store. Twisted Village is one of the world's greatest record stores and focuses on psychedelic rock, 20th century classical, jazz, reggae, and electronic music. Friendly staff as well. This store is located at 12B Elliot Street in Harvard Square, Cambridge. There are a bunch of used stores around the city where used punk records do wash up, but you need to dig and stop in a lot in order to get them. Stereo Jacks on Massachusetts Avenue in Cambridge, between Harvard Square and Porters Square, sometimes has great punk records that turn up for cheap, and is a great store for soul, country, and jazz. Looney Tunes has two locations (one on Mass Ave in Cambridge and one on the corner of Boylston and Massachusetts Avenue in the Back Bay) that are worth checking out. Planet Records on JFK Boulevard in Harvard Square is worth a look. Weirdo Records (weirdorecords.com) is currently located in a house on Somerville Avenue in Somerville, which has retail hours on Tuesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, but is soon moving into a retail space on Massachusetts Avenue in Cambridge. Weirdo carries all sorts of esoteric records and does not overlap with Twisted Village, and Angela has a really good used selection as well. Last time I was there I got the Solger 7" repress. Mimaroglu (mimaroglumusicsales.com) is a great music retailer of all sorts of noise and experimental music. If you e-mail Keith you can stop by his office space and buy records and CDs.

LABELS:

Two friends I have started a label called Ride the Snake to mostly release Boston-area bands. It's our hope that if we put all our favorite bands in one place it will look impressive to the rest of the world. The LIFE PARTNERS 7" is out now, but there are upcoming releases from GENERAL INTEREST, CONVERSIONS, REPORTS, BABA YAGA, and Pittsburgh's DEAD AT 24. (ridethesnakerecords.com) Painkiller is the premier label for local hardcore with releases from MIND ERASER, WASTE MANAGEMENT, BREATHING FIRE, MENTALLY CHALLENGED, MEN'S INTEREST, and many others (painkillerrex.com.) Dan from LIBYANS does a label called Shock to the System, which has released records by RED THREAD and WITCHES WITH DICKS among others. Twisted Village Records has been quiet as of late, but has put out a bunch of incredible records since the '80s and has plans to do a BABA YAGA LP. Lockin Out Records (run by Greg who used to sing for MENTAL) has slowed down a bit, but put out a 7" for NEW LOWS recently and a pizza picture disc LP for Detroit's RZL DZL. Howard Stelzer still does the great experimental label Intransitive.

VENUES:

The eternal struggle. There really isn't an ideal punk venue for DIY punk shows these days. There is basically a smattering of house venues (Platonic Sleepovers, Wadzilla Mansion, Gay Gardens) and the Democracy Center (a building).

That is all for now. Thanks for reading.

Circle Pat

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Skidney, oh Skidney. Back in its infancy Sydney was the home of many convicts and cutthroat razor gangs. And now, in its teen years, it seems not much has changed on our mean streets. The punk scene in general has always been very up and down and bands often have a limited shelf life of about two years. At the moment Sydney seems to be thriving—a lot of new bands pumping stuff out, not just the jaded old embittered crusties showing the young tykes how it's done.

As far as venues go, most all-ages shows happen in and around Marrickville and Newtown. Marrickville is a home to a number of DIY warehouses hidden in the cavities of the inner west's industrial wasteland. Maggotville is the longest running one that most overseas visitors may know of, but there's another good space called Louie's, run by some young kids.

If touring bands want to come over here, often is the case we can organize everything, from posters and gigs to most 18-and-up shows, which are often held in pubs. My mate Glen Zombie Dog is the guy to talk to. Contact him at zombiedog72@hotmail.com.

Now for the bands themselves! How about my band for starters, eh? DEATHCAGE has been around for about eighteen months, has a 7" out on Endless Blockades, a 7" on Schizophrenic, and later in the year we will put out a 7" on Sniper Fucker. We draw our influences from CRUDE, LIP CREAM, YNGWIE MALMSTEEN, and of course, DEATHSIDE. You can contact us at myspace.com/deathcagesydney.

If you long for the days of early-'80s Orange County and flannel shirts, then REPOMAN is for you. These guys have a great BLACK FLAG/ADOLESCENTS feel and have just released their own 7". Recently, DEATHCAGE and REPOMAN went on tour together to Melbourne—the Sydney Daggers Tour of Destruction—with our mates in TAIPAN. TAIPAN is an eccentric mix of black metal and kvlt D-beat, quite a unique sound, and man, these dudes are the proverbial loose cannon! They also have a 7" out, and it's kvlt as fvck. TAIPAN at myspace.com/taipandaggers and try REPOMAN at myspace.com/repomandaggers.

Another cool Sydney Daggers band is FATTURA DELLA MORTE, who produces atmospheric sludge that's the aural equivalent of sucking down bucket bongs till you puke. But in a good way. Very reminiscent of EYEHATEGOD or IRON MONKEY. These gods of rock have a few CDs out, so contact them at myspace.com/fatturadellamorte.

Long-time jaded old farts AVO is still at it and has never lost it after all these years, always managing to get the crowd going. AVO is what VILE would be like if they'd managed to stick with it. If you like your hardcore angry and inspired by the stuff out of Boston, then you'd like their take-no-prisoners shit. They have a new LP out on Kangaroo Records, as well as *sheadloads* of 7"s. Contact them at longlivecrime@hotmail.com.

Another new(er) band is WALRORA, who has risen from the ashes of SCUM SYSTEM KILL. I have only heard them play a couple of times. Very cool traditional crust in the vein of AXEGRINDER—they will have their blacksmiths crying under a full moon. Demo tape out now and a split 7" with epic crust punks SCAB from Wellington, NZ, about to be released. Listen to 'em at myspace.com/walrora or email walora@gmail.com.

DEAD WASTED is a D-beat band that's been getting around. These guys have been playing in local faves VAE VICTIS and DEAD BY DAWN for years, and have a sound reminiscent of DISFEAR and MÖTORHEAD. By the time you read this they should have their demo roaring and ready to go. Contact them at myspace.com/deadwasted. They're real congenial dudes, so drop 'em a line.

Other places of interest:

Black Rose anarchist bookshop is situated on Enmore Rd in Newtown. Paint It Black DIY record shop is also on Enmore Rd. And hey, if you're in the area, drop by the tattoo shop I work at and get some ink while you're here. The shop is called Diablo Art, again on Enmore Rd. How handy is that!

Any more info contact me at iranairlines200@yahoo.com.au.

Cheers!

Special thanks to Perpy Valls, aka Nikki.

Scene Report
By Spider x Death

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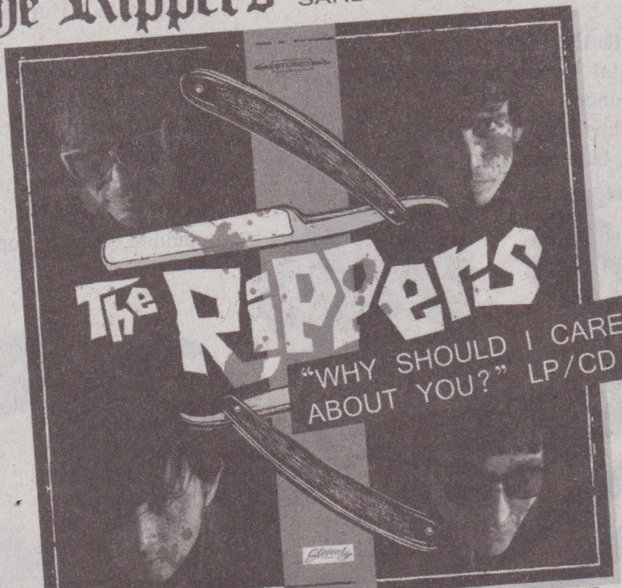

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Hunx and his punx

The machismo-drenched 'core bros will tell ya that pop is for fags. Just ask 'em. HUNX AND HIS PUNX, the latest effort from Seth Bogart of GRAVY TRAIN!!!! and PANTY RAID fame, might even say the same thing. Seth, aka Hunx, has traded his hip-hop dance troop tomfoolery for a primo brand of bubble-punk, offering up not-so-innocent odes to heavy man-on-man action with the subtlety of a 17 foot erection. Why then are all these straight-guy record dorks (like, I dunno, moi!) bopping around to this giant-Tom-Of-Finland-cock-in-twink-ass gay bubble-punk beat? Latent desires? Shrouded sexuality? The recognition of a great band when you hear one? Yes...maybe to all three questions! MRR sat down with Hunx to pick his prick about His Punx, which includes a fellow by the name of NOBUNNY. Lube up and read on...

Interview by Alex
Intro by Mitch Cardwell

MRR: I might as well address the big fat elephant in the room—what about all these sex change rumors?
Hunx: Just because a guy is into leather and lace and wears nylons and wigs and has only gay friends suddenly everyone thinks he's transitioning! Everyone who has been writing about my band thinks they know what they're talking about but only time will tell the truth about my sexuality and identity.

MRR: I can tell fashion pleasures you. What are some other looks you're watching?
I've always loved denim and leather. I also really like to wear a jumbo bow. I like to stock up on them around Christmas, and then wear them all year long.

MRR: The singles you just released are very sensual, sexual and controversial. Is your life crazy, sexy, or cool?
Ha ha, everyone thinks I'm so controversial just because I put myself naked on my first single. I would say my life is all those things.

MRR: I'm into it, especially the full frontal. What's hottest: soft dick, semi, or boner?
There is something really sexy about the stage between semi and boner. But if I had to pick just one, um, what do you think?

MRR: I saw a cover with you kissing you, so basically you're obsessed with yourself?
For the "Good Kisser" single I thought it would be cool if I was kissing myself on the cover. Me as a dude and as a lady. I want so bad to say that I'm not obsessed with myself and that I was trying to make a political statement but the truth is YES I'm obsessed with myself! I listen to my own music over and over.

MRR: What's your best feature? And what needs work?
I would have to say that my best feature would probably be my sparkling personality. My attitude needs an adjustment though. I think my bod is pretty good.

MRR: Your body brings to mind a charging bull rhino. What's your secret?
Stop eating cheese right before going to bed.

MRR: Okay, I'm bored. Tell me a wild sex story.
Once in Guerneville, California I got involved in a Roman-esque orgy, which started in the form of a board game called "Apples to Apples" and ended with getting frisky with the concierge, the bartender and a midget and I'm not even kidding. I was so hung over the next morning I couldn't even go shopping. Crazy right!

MRR: I love gay townies! If you got to live in a weird small town where would you live?
Guerneville, duh!

MRR: How is working with No Bunny? Was it purely a sexual thing?
No Bunny is only truly interested in me when I'm wearing panty hose, which is quite often actually! He approached me when I was vulnerable and nobody cared about him. He told me he had written these songs he wanted some high school girls to sing but since he was a creep and I was the closest thing he knew to a teenage girl, I became his muse. Next thing you know

we were in the studio. No practice! No nothing! We were literally writing last-minute lyrics in the sound booth. I really love working with him, he's such a genius. But I'm like his ex now or something because he won't give me more songs.

MRR: How hot is he naked?
How hot is he naked? Well, lets just say I definitely would smash a bag of Cheeto's over his head if I ever got the chance.

MRR: Did you try any moves on him?
We have a professional working relationship. But when I dress him in nylons, a leather jacket and a blonde man-wig I think he's *so hot*. I love his hairy chest.

MRR: I hear you just kicked someone out of your live band and they call you Miss Ross behind your back. Are you basically like the hugest drama queen or what?
This bratty teenager I hired purely because of his good looks was secretly talking bad about me behind my back so I had to say bye bye bye! I don't care if someone is eighteen and I'm a grown man, do *not* mess with me. If you wanna call me a drama queen for that, go ahead.

MRR: I think it's totally hard to work with teens when you're a borderline-pedophile, too. What other weird fetishes do you have?
Ha ha, borderline-pedophile! Yeah right. The only fetish I can really get behind is getting peed on or peeing on people.

MRR: What celebrity's career are you most modeling your own after?
I wish I could say something cool like Courtney Love but who would be the gay Kurt Cobain?

MRR: Ew, damaged goods! You would look good blonde, though. How important is your hair to your music?
Well, considering that I own a hair salon in Oakland called Down at Lulu's, I'd say it's pretty important!

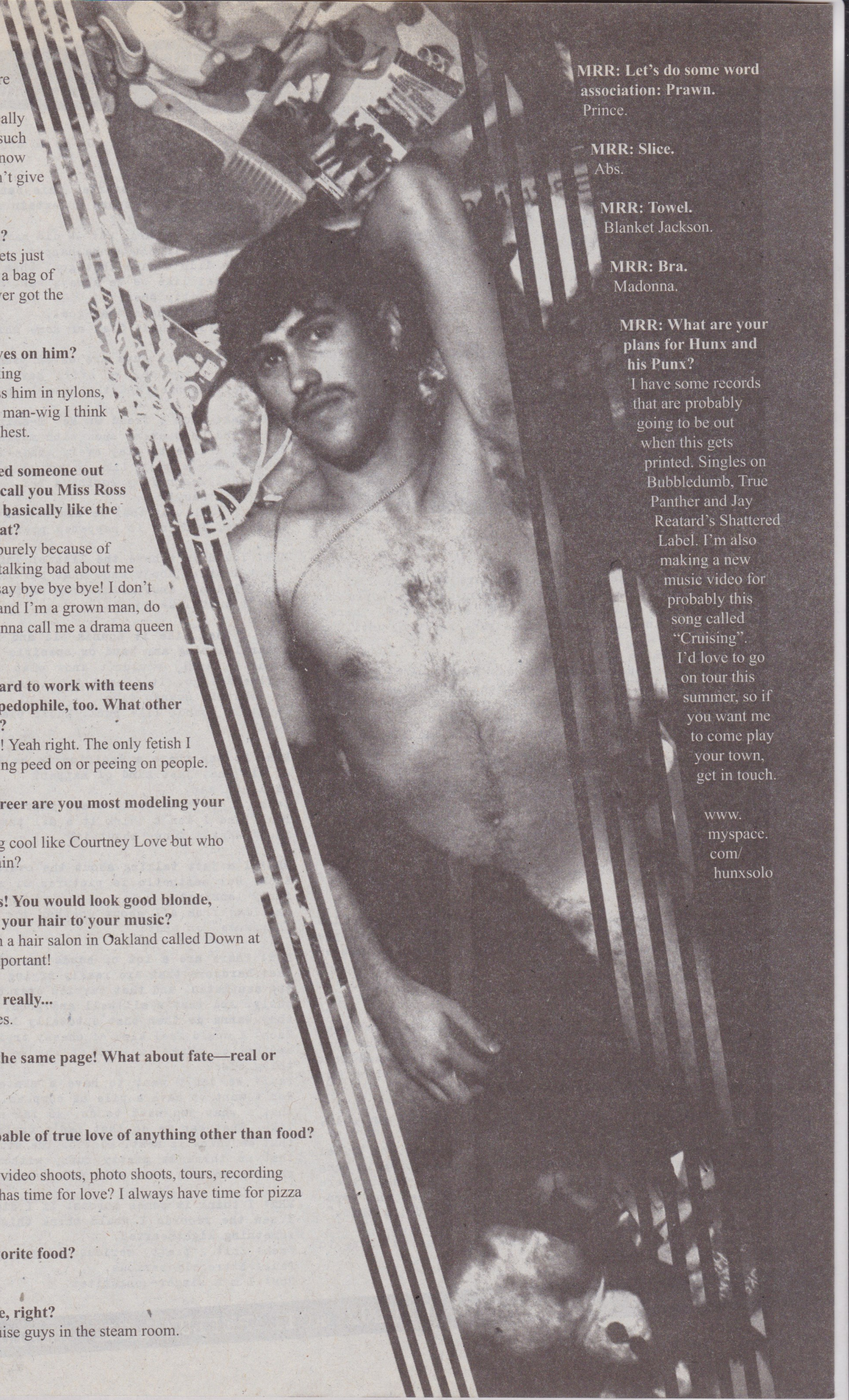
MRR: Is there a God? No really...
Yes, her name is Grace Jones.

MRR: Ok, now we're on the same page! What about fate—real or what?
Yes I totally believe in fate.

MRR: I hear you're incapable of true love of anything other than food? Is this true?
In my busy life of constant video shoots, photo shoots, tours, recording sessions and haircuts, who has time for love? I always have time for pizza though!

MRR: Can you pick a favorite food?
Bubble Yum.

MRR: Exercising: so lame, right?
Not lame when you can cruise guys in the steam room.



MRR: Let's do some word association: Prawn.
Prince.

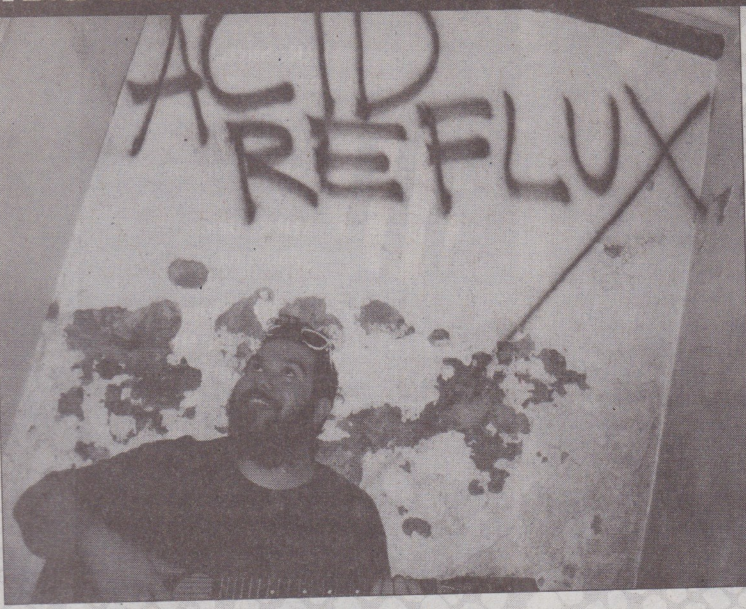
MRR: Slice.
Abs.

MRR: Towel.
Blanket Jackson.

MRR: Bra.
Madonna.

MRR: What are your plans for Hunx and his Punx?
I have some records that are probably going to be out when this gets printed. Singles on Bubbledumb, True Panther and Jay Reatard's Shattered Label. I'm also making a new music video for probably this song called "Cruising". I'd love to go on tour this summer, so if you want me to come play your town, get in touch.

www.myspace.com/hunxsolo



Interview by Matt Smith.

MRR: Are you guys excited about hardcore in 2009?
Ron: I love it. It's my favorite thing in the world for real. Seriously. I love hardcore. It's the best. There's nothing better in life than being a punk forever, until you are dead.
Zach: Which will be 2009.
Ron: I can only hope. That's the fame, posthumous fame.
Paul: I'll say yes. There are not necessarily tons of great bands, but I don't think that really matters. Ron is right, it's better to be a punk than, like, a yuppie or anything else. I had a good time tonight. I threw a chair at people.

MRR: Do you feel like it's just something you're used to, something your friends are into? Like a routine? This routine to hang with your friends and play music and everything.
Zach: I feel like there are so few people around here that I even relate to in the same way over punk that it has nothing to do with it.
Paul: Wait, what do you mean? I don't understand the question.

MRR: I mean, when you're playing a show do you feel like you're really stoked to be playing music for these people or are you just looking forward to doing this thing and seeing your friends and everything?
Paul: I think it's both.
Sean: Looking forward to rage.
Ron: It's a case by case basis.
Paul: I mean, when we're playing shows in places we've been or where there's people we know it's usually both, but when we went to the West Coast we hardly knew anybody and it's still fun to play those shows. Yeah, there's some shows you play that you're not excited about or whatever.

MRR: But then when you do that are you asking yourself, "What the hell am I doing? Why am I doing this?"
Paul: Not too much. Maybe it's because I'm older, and I feel older, and I know why I'm doing it. I've been doing it long enough to know that even though there's some shows where you're like "meh," things happen where you feel the opposite and you think, "Alright, I know why I'm doing this."
Zach: What else is there to do?
Paul: That's a good point, what the fuck else is there to do?
Sean: Be a yuppie.
Paul: Yeah, no yuppies. Or go to school? Absolutely fucking not.

MRR: When you guys started this band did you have a goal; did you set out to sound a certain way or did it just sort of happen organically?
Ron: No on the sound, but we did have the goal to play every state, which is not gonna happen.
Zach: We didn't have that goal when we started.
Ron: I feel like we've always wanted to go to every state. Even the shitty ones.
Zach: I don't share that goal.
Paul yelling about Utah or some shit

MRR: I think you guys are seven years old now.
Paul: Aw, come on. We still haven't played the thirteen original colonies and that really pisses me off.

MRR: Make "Don't Tread On Me" T-shirts.
Paul: And open every show with musket fire!
Zach: I'd like to play every state in Mexico.
Paul: There's only like seven or eight. *There are 32, a fact Paul learned by losing a bet.*
Ron: It's easy!
Paul: I would say that we did not have a goal to sound like anything, I think it happened pretty organically.

MRR: You didn't have the list of influences?
Zach: I still don't know what our influences are.
Sean: I don't know aside from Rattus.
Ron: I just like good!

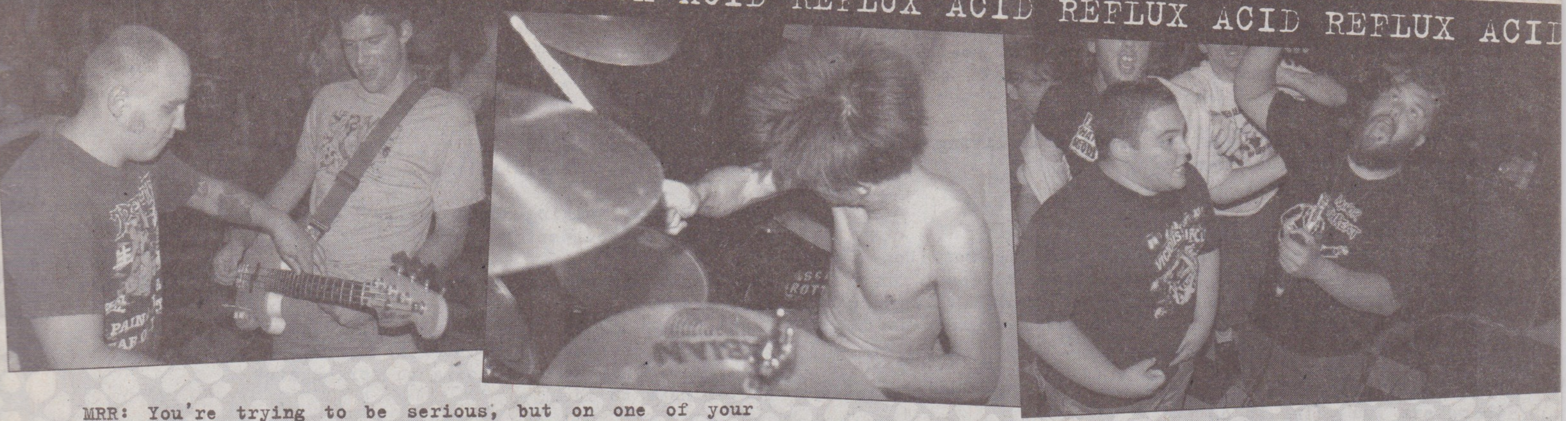
MRR: I feel like it sounds old and fast but it's not necessarily aping any band or specific vibe or anything.
Zach: I really wouldn't know what to tell you as far as influences go. It's hard to listen to your own stuff and say what it sounds like.
Paul: It sounds like punk. Music played by people who like punk.

MRR: So was there a decision to be kind of weird or funny or did that just kind of happen?
Paul: Oh man
Zach: I don't think it's all that weird.
Paul: And I don't think it's all that funny.
Zach: What's funny about it?

MRR: I'm just talking about the overall aesthetic.
Zach: Our aesthetic is pictures of us. Are you calling us funny looking?
yelling from all about whether the aesthetic is "hot" or "handsome" or what

MRR: There are a lot of bands around that are playing old fast hardcore that are really trying to copy a certain vibe and aesthetic, and that carries over to their artwork, obviously. And that's all well and good, 'cause if that's what they wanna do then that's totally fine.
Zach: I would feel kind of cheesy trying to work within that aesthetic, which is kind of why we try to think of something else.
Paul: We don't want to have a skateboarding skeleton. We don't want to have a pile of corpses. That stuff is fine if that's what you want to do. As far as our aesthetic, it's like, what can we do that isn't trying to be anything, but that we think is neat. Most of the stuff we've done is stuff that we think is pretty funny without much thought as to whether anybody else will understand or like it.

MRR: I think it comes across. If I didn't know you guys and I saw the records I would think this band is trying to do something lighthearted.
Zach: Shit's pretty serious though.
Paul: Extremely serious.
Ron: I'm a singer-songwriter.



MRR: You're trying to be serious, but on one of your records on the label there's an ostrich chasing Ron around 'cause he's stealing an egg.
Paul: That's not funny. Ron almost died.

MRR: I also never noticed till recently that one of the labels on the other record has a giant penis in the sky with wings.
Zach: It's in the desert. There's nothing more serious than the desert.

MRR: You guys aren't serious.
Zach: Well, lyrically.

MRR: Yeah, It's pretty serious. It's everyday stuff. I was gonna ask, Ron, do you write all the lyrics?
Ron: Yes.

MRR: Do you write them after the music, or do you write them before the music?
Ron: I write them whenever I can. Now, Zach generally will lay something down and then we'll just kind of work together on it.
Zach: This has never happened actually. The process is that we write a song, and then a few months later it has lyrics.

MRR: Do you really want to get a vasectomy?
Ron, Zach, Paul: Yes, fuck yes, yes. *Sean hesitating*
Paul: Get on board.
Ron: Fuck breeders.

MRR: Sean, how old are you?
Sean: Twenty.

MRR: Don't listen to what these assholes have to say.
Zach: *laughing* Don't make your own decisions. Let us cut it for you.

MRR: What's that song "Bleed and Destroy" about?
Ron: It's about young women being positive in hardcore and in their everyday lives and just being awesome.

MRR: I noticed there were a lot of girls at the show tonight.
Paul: Pretty fair amount.
Zach: There've been a lot more in Albany lately.
Ron: It's awesome.
Zach: There's lots of girls in bands.
Ron: They only make them better. It rules.
Zach: It does rule.
Paul: People come and go in hardcore but in Albany, at least in the past, it's had a particularly bad case of girlfriends of dudes showing up for three months or so and then girls going away and dudes staying. Like with the young people, there'd be these rotations of these girls, and they would be cool, look punk, seem nice, and then disappear. It's a bummer. I don't know why it's like that.

MRR: Well, I think I know why.
Paul: 'Cause it's a total sausage party. It just sucks, it sucks to think that punk doesn't mean enough to people that they'll just come to shows anyway. And the dudes that stick around are, you know, douche bags.
Zach: Well that's probably a big part of the reason. Who would want to be around those douche bags once they're done with them?
Paul: That's a good point.

MRR: Well, the older you get the more you see the cycle of younger kids coming through. When I see stuff like that I ask myself, what is it about this that still attracts me?
Zach: I know why I like it, and I don't really care whether somebody is just going to be around for a few months. I mean, especially in a place like Albany, at least its warm bodies at a show. And if I was thinking, "Fuck these people, they don't really care about it. They don't care about it for the reasons I do," then it would just be like me and the other people in this room or something.

MRR: I know this isn't an interview with me, but I'm beyond even questioning when I see younger kids around whether this kid is down or whatever.
Zach: It doesn't matter.

MRR: Yeah, who cares, if someone is into the music, cool, and if they stick around and play in bands and put records out or whatever, that's fine with me, and if they don't, fuck it, it's fine.
Paul: I think the only thing I don't like is when people come in and then they drop out and just have nothing positive to say about the time they did in punk. If you want to move on and drop out that's cool, but I really hate when people shit all over their time in punk. It's kind of unnecessary.

MRR: Or pass it off like it's just something you did when you were younger.
Ron: I definitely feel like the older you get and you're like, "I might as well just get 'stay punk' tattooed on my face," you definitely know the kids who're just waiting to get a car or get a job.

MRR: I have a job and I'd like to get a car, I just can't afford it.
Ron: I've just decided that I'm fed up with young people making protest style music.

MRR: What do you have to say? You're 20. What do you think about this?
Sean: I see a lot of kids who come and go and it sucks, but I've gotten used to it.
Zach: You love the young kids, you fucking smuggled one across state lines the other day!
Sean: Yeah, I brought a kid up here from South Carolina.
Zach: They kidnapped a kid from South Carolina!
Paul: How old is that kid now?
Sean: Sixteen. He was gonna come tonight, but needed a ride and my van is stuck behind Ron's house.

MRR: I work with some people my age who are still into hardcore and I feel weird even telling them that I'm still down, 'cause what are we gonna talk about? They kind of give you this weird look like, "Oh, that's still around?"

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Ron: You just come to realize that you don't need to care about people who don't care about punk. *everybody laughs* I don't want to know people who aren't punk! I know people who are not punk and they are not awesome. You see old friends and you're like, "what a white cap you have" or "that's a nice job you're doing." Who cares?

MRR: So Zach, I gotta ask you about your living situation. I heard you're a house man?
Zach: I'm a house punk.

MRR: You used to be a squatter.
Zach: I used to squat. You know, squat or rot. Now I'm a house punk. It's a pretty good situation, at least for a few months, and then I think half of us are going to run away to Mexico and maybe that's the last you'll hear from us.
Sean: I'm squatting currently.

MRR: Wait, when these kids ask you to do the nude calendar thing are you going to do it?
Sean: Yeah. I already did a calendar in my underwear.
Ron: It's amazing. You need to see the picture.
Sean: I'm Mr. September. You know, hard hat, underwear, drill. It's for my boss.
Zach: Is that Krishna?
Sean: No, no, not the Krishna boss!
Ron: The men of EVR.

MRR: So what does the future hold for Acid Reflux? Besides playing the rest of the other states.
Sean: Japan!
Zach: We'll see. We'll be touring before this sees print, and recording before that.

MRR: Doing an unnecessary LP?
Paul: Absolutely not. I am going on record right now, we will never do an LP.
Zach: I don't know how we would write that many songs.
Paul: If we do it will be a joke, don't buy it. I mean, unless you like bad jokes.
Zach: No, it's really not going to happen. Ever. There are some bands that I want to hear an LPs worth of shit from and we're not one of them.

MRR: Ok. Top punk records.
Paul: No! No. Not answering that. Next question.

MRR: That was my last question.
Paul: What? This is worse than the last time you interviewed us.

MRR: Aw, come on.
Ron: Okay, open discussion.
Paul: About what.
Ron: Shitty interviewers!
Paul: Worst interviewers, No. 1, 2, 3, and 4, Matt Smith!

MRR: Oh dude, I wanted to ask. I heard you're doing some modeling now, Zach?
Zach: Uh, I'm working on it.

MRR: You're a good-looking dude, I bet you could make a go of it.
Zach: I made 50 bucks today.

MRR: How old was he? Was he good looking?
Laughter
Paul: How much did you make a week ago?

MRR: I'm talkin' about legit.
Paul: 450 dollars.
Sean: Who'd you pay 50 dollars to drive you?
Paul: Come on, explain it!

MRR: I'm just talking about legit.
Zach: Oh, do you want my card?

MRR: Yeah, let me see it. Wait, what'd you do for $450 this last week?
Zach: Uhh, this can't be in the interview.
Paul: Come on, make this interesting.
Zach: Ron, when are you going to work again?
Ron: I have no idea.

MRR: Did you quit your job?
Ron: Kinda.

MRR: What do you do for work?
Ron: Uh, I was delivering pizzas, but I don't really have a vehicle to do that. I got back from tour and I was like, "I don't want to do anything! I just want to be a shiftless lay-a-bout." Not working is great!

MRR: I thought when you're not working you're supposed to be productive. That's the punk way.
Paul: How many members of the band are homeless right now? Only you, Sean?
Sean: Uhh, yeah.
Ron: Soon to not be.
Zach: We're doing pretty good right now. We went from Ron living in his van
Paul: Zach living in the woods.
Ron: Generally, as a rule, three members of the band are unemployed.
Sean: I might lose my job. I'm not going to work tomorrow and I was threatened to be fired today *Sean was fired.*
Ron and Zach: YEAH!
Ron: I told my boss, "I'm retiring in April to go to Mexico" and he was like, "You can't retire if I can't retire!"

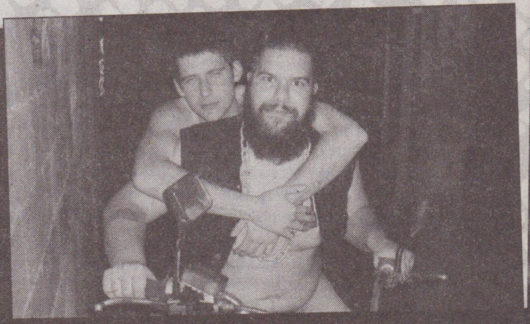
MRR: Wait, are you guys really going to Mexico?
Ron: I'm going!
Zach: Acid Reflux: acoustic tour of Mexico. Every state. Tabasco here we come.

MRR: You guys gonna hop trains down there?
Ron: Yeah!

MRR: I thought you guys were a punk band.
Zach: What?

MRR: Hobo folk.
Ron: You want us to write an LP, this is how it's gonna get written, buddy!
Paul: It'll be written on a spiritual journey in Mexico.

MRR: Will it sound like *Sandinista*?
Paul: It'll sound more like the movie *The Three Amigos*.



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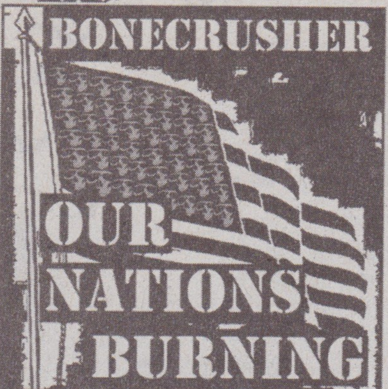

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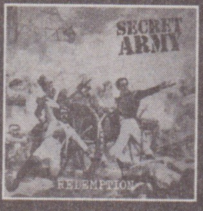

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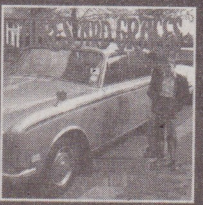

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EXISTERS

The Existers were a 1978 power pop new wave punk group from Toronto. The band grew out of an earlier group known as the Toyz. George Higton from the Existers also ran Shades*, one of the first Toronto punk fanzines, so there is a lot of history behind this band. They came in to* Equalizing-X-Distort *in May of last year to tell their stories of the old scene.*

This interview was conducted by Greg Dick.

MRR: Now Barrie, you were a member of the Toyz, and the other original member Baby Oil, who was also in the Existers, is sadly no longer with us. So we will have to rely on you for most of the Toyz information. How did the Toyz come about?

Barrie: We were just fans like everybody else. Mike Dent, the drummer for the Dents, was at the same high school as us, and he started telling us about punk rock. He said you got to come and check this thing out. So we went down and saw the Diodes play, and that sort of blew my lid. And then I went to see the Viletones, and I thought "Okay I don't know what this is." I had been a prog rock/glam guy, and this music was something that I was looking for. Something fresh. Everything was so horrible at the time. So we just started hanging out. I decided to see if I could write some songs; that was the Toyz. I had written a couple of songs, and they sounded punky to me.

MRR: Did the Toyz do any cover songs?

Barrie: "My Boyfriend's Back". Well, Baby Oil swung every which way, and so there's going to be trouble. His boyfriend's going to beat the hell out of you if you mess around.

MRR: Who was in the Toyz?

Barrie: There was Steven "Baby Oil" Hall, who was the lead singer, and then there was Ricky Rancid. That was what we called our drummer Ricky Mertz, he is gone parts unknown, and Peter Pubic was our fifteen-year-old bass player. I thought he was about seventeen or eighteen. He had this little moustache, and this sort of power.

George: Yeah, but nobody pushed those kids around.

Barrie: No they didn't, but he was playing at David's and Sandy was always hitting on him, until he found out he was fifteen and in his club and then he blew his mind. So we end up replacing him with Mark Weber, who we called Mark Machine and he was the older brother of Even Weber, who was the lead singer of the Dents, so it's all incestuous.

MRR: I didn't realize there was such a strong Dents connection. Where was the first gig for the Toyz?

Barrie: It was at David's. We did three nights with the Curse. That was a disaster the first night, and sort of slowly came around, but it was mostly just booze and stupidity.

MRR: Tell me about the Curse. What were they like?

Barrie: We were like groupies for the Curse before we actually had our band. We had a shirt all signed by Dr. Bourque and Mickey Skin. They were tough and brave. They were just crazy wild girls. One time when they were playing at the Shock Theatre, opening up for Sylvain Sylvain, I don't know who did the booking, but there was this Who cover band, and we started booing them. The Curse got up and were crawling up on the stage, and these guys just packed

Below: the Toyz

it in. They were afraid that Mickey Skin was going to rip their heads off.

MRR: You guys played the Shock Theatre with the Ugly. What do you remember of those guys?

Barrie: The Ugly are my favorite out of all the punk bands.

George: That was the show where I first saw the Toyz.

Barrie: Well that's right. We were asked to do this fundraiser for *Shades Magazine* and it was utter chaos. Baby Oil was really on his game and he had cat food that he shoved down his pants, so he was pulling that out and throwing chunks of it at people. And we had taken a fire extinguisher; we thought this would be really cool, like a dry ice mist or something. I don't know what the hell we thought. Anyway, he pulled it out at the end, and we cleared about 200 to 300 people right out of the Shock Theatre and onto College Street, I remember members of the Diodes just running and coughing.

MRR: I heard he was also rolling around in broken glass at that gig that preceded the fire extinguisher.

Barrie: Someone ran up in front of him and started smashing bottles on the floor, so he just dove off the stage and just started doing the worm.

MRR: Were you allowed to play there again after that?

Barrie: They sort of hinted that we should help clean up, but we were in such bad shape that it didn't happen. Baby Oil and Mark the bass player went to York University to book us a gig and when they were there the guy who loaded alcohol into the bar showed up, so they stole and drank a forty ouncer of vodka but they mixed it with pills called Artane, which are totally insane. They were for Parkinson's disease. You would be sitting there with four of your best friends and then they would disappear. But you may have had a three-hour tea party. You just don't know.

Mark was found at a self-serve gas station trying to fill up cars. He thought he was at work. And Baby Oil disappeared. We had a couple of gigs booked and we didn't know where he was. We had to go and line up in a field and go across looking for a body. The police had picked him up naked, he was lying in a pond up by York University rolling around. They took him to two hospitals. Both times he was so crazy; "We have to take you to Whitby," and in those days they could just give you a shot and sign you in for thirty days, and you had no rights, so that's what happened. I got this call a few days later, "I'm in Whitby, man." He woke up in a room with a dome at the door, and he went up to the door and he was like "I'm okay. I just overdosed." And all the guys who were outside were like, "Yeah, I'm okay." And they all start dancing around him, like one of your worst nightmares.

MRR: At Club David's Baby Oil was known to pull link sausage from his fly, and I don't know what he was doing with pork and beans...

Barrie: What was really gross about the whole thing was that he never wore underwear and he would take the link sausage and put them in. The whole idea was he was going to open his fly and pull them out like a cartoon. But of course it's all jammed in his jeans with his ten-inch

schlong and it just turned into mush. So he would reach in his pants and just start pulling out clumps of sausage. It was quite hilarious.

MRR: Describe Club David's for us.

Barrie: Club David's was a really cool mixture. It was a gay disco, and I don't think it was doing that well, so they started to allow punk there around September of '77. After twelve o'clock it would go back to being a disco. There was a restaurant attached to it called the Garage for little nineteen year old guys from the 'burbs or whatever. There were transvestites, transsexuals, hookers, pimps, and all kinds of neat street life, and they would all come out and be part of David's. But I used to just hang out with the deejay there. We would put two records on at a time because you were trying to kill disco as much as you could. You would play two records at the same time and they wouldn't know.

Dennis: Where was David's?

Barrie: On Phibes Street. You know where the Gas Works was? About a block north and then you had to sneak and tuck in. Do you remember Bellows? We practiced there. There used to be a big disco called Bellows and then they gutted it and our manager got us in there and then the City of Toronto chucked us out.

Dennis: We were there for a while. I remember hiding our equipment amongst construction debris so it wouldn't get stolen.

George: Our shows were our practices.

MRR: What was the last show that the Toyz played?

Barrie: The last show that the Toyz played was without Baby Oil, at the Shock Theatre again ...

MRR: So they let you back in.

Barrie: Yeah they let us back in and they were cool. They thought it was a great show.
George: The Shock was run by fans.

MRR: You played with the Ugly there, and I think you played with the Ugly at David's didn't you? You were telling me that one time the police came in looking for somebody from the Ugly.

Barrie: They took the PA system. They came in like totally cool. They knew the boys. It was like "Oh hi Mike. How are ya doin'?" They just grabbed all the stuff and out the door. "Oh well. I guess that's all for tonight." The next day Johnny Garbagecan had another PA set up.

MRR: And Johnny Garbagecan was the manager for the Ugly? And he always had a briefcase with him.

George: Johnny also published the first punk fanzine.

Barrie: *T.O. Punk.*

MRR: What came first the *Crash 'n Burn Newsletter* or the *T.O. Punk*?

George: Probably *Crash 'n Burn Newsletter*, but I'm guessing.

MRR: Getting to zines, George you were involved with *Shades* magazine. What was your role in the zine?

George: Well I wanted to do something with more legs under it then a fanzine. At the time I thought Toronto needed a tabloid from the ground up. It's difficult to conceive at this point that Toronto had no underground press, unless it was photocopied and distributed as handouts. I was inspired a bit by *New York Rocker*. There was nothing here from the street level. A lot of the stuff was kind of verging on academic, with a lot of theorizing. There was some Marxist stuff, some specific art publications, but nothing from the street that was looking at what was happening around the corner. What was happening down at the Shock Theatre.

It's strange the way the public record works. I never understood it. Partly I wanted to get into putting out a magazine because I understood that it was really easy to be a public record. It is really easy to be the media as many generations have discovered since. And when you are the media you can write the record, and that is a power that I think everybody should access.

Barrie: But he couldn't write much about us because people would whine so we had *Exister Tunes*.

George: Not that there were any petty personal politics going on in the Toronto punk scene in the '70s.

MRR: There was a promoter that came in from New York City, called Louie Louie. Did he ever write for *Shades*?

George: No… he rings a bell but can't place the contact.

MRR: He brought in a band called the New York Niggers. He did the Dead Boys at the Rock Palace.

George: If he did the Dead Boys I probably met him because we hung out with the Dead Boys as much as we could, they were nice guys, a lot of fun and really talented.

Barrie: Jimmy Zero—my whole guitar style is based on his rhythm guitar playing, not Cheetah Chrome. I could never be a wailing lead guitar guy, just that thick rhythm "Sonic Reducer" kind of sound. People say, "Ooh it's like you were from the Cars." No, it was the Dead Boys for god sakes.

MRR: Did you get any international feedback?

George: Well, we had international writers. In fact one of those writers was Olivier Cossard.

Barrie: He was our second bass player. Our first bass player was Paul who exploded or something and then we had Olivier.

George: Olivier was a genuine Paris intellectual, as he proclaimed himself, and he was right. He did some shows with us and then bowed out. The thing is he is almost like an anthropologist I think. He dropped in on Toronto in the late '70s to see how this species lived.

Barrie: And then the government caught wind and he got deported.

George: And not a moment too soon. He shaved his beard for us.

Barrie: Well yeah. That had to go.

MRR: Was *Shades* available outside Toronto?

George: Yes. In fact an early coup for us was to land national distribution across Canada. I got letters from kids in the prairies, from Banff and places. I felt a little sad sometimes because I felt like I was selling them a myth because I was making this stuff up. I was rhapsodizing it.

MRR: Don't tell us that now after all these years.

George: If you are going to have a scene you are going to need media to create buzz around a scene. It's their job to make a story interesting. So I tried to make it interesting. And I would get letters from kids in the prairies. It was so touching, 'I want to come to Toronto to start a band. Thank you so much for opening this world to me.' If that's a positive then I'll accept it. I was glad about that. But on the other hand I felt a little dubious about it.

MRR: At the time I think Toronto was for at least a year or two the only place where you could get exposure to this kind of music.

George: Well there was a scene in Vancouver. DOA and…

MRR: That happened a little later I think.

George: I don't know. And there was stuff going on in St. John's and Halifax. There was stuff going on all over the place.

Barrie: Vancouver had some early bands because they came to Toronto.

MRR: Well there was the Skulls.

Barrie: The Skulls came with Joey Shithead, and in fact they opened for themselves and switched instruments and called themselves Ernie And The Bloated Cows. Now there is a fact you probably don't know.

MRR: So George, when you were at the Shock and you saw the Toyz playing, I guess that was the first time you got to meet Barrie …

George: Yeah. At the time what struck me about the Toyz was that they had more depth then the ordinary run of the mill punk band. There were a lot of them around with this monolithic sound. Kind of thin, with a top end. You guys thought about bottom and it seemed like you thought about arrangement. You had real guts. It was real depth and force. I said "I want to be in something like that."

Barrie: I said, well there is a problem here; the lead singer 's in the halfway house.

George: Perfect. I'll take over. We had such brass.

Barrie: We started that way because Dennis was going to start a band with Baby Oil. It was going to be just drums and guitar. When he was in Whitby he learned how to play guitar sort of.

George: He would have made a million dollars.

Dennis: It wouldn't have lasted.

Barrie: He was just going to use you and him, and instead I stole you both.

MRR: How was getting Baby Oil to move over to bass from being a front man? Was he okay with that?

Barrie: Well yeah. He sort of was already onto a new life. He was washing dishes at a disco or something.

George: He shed skins every couple of weeks.

MRR: Sounds like it.

Barrie: Very Lou Reed-ish. That was his hero. I was there one night when him and his wife Terry sat there and played a Beatles song, and he did the picking part you know the lead line and I thought, if you could do that you can play bass. Olivier is getting shipped off to Paris in two weeks, so why don't you come practice. He went out and bought himself a precision bass and within a week he was our bass player.

MRR: And you knew Baby Oil from the glam rock scene.

Barrie: I knew Baby Oil from when I was eleven or twelve.

MRR: Tell me about meeting Steve Leckie of the Viletones during those glam rock years.

Barrie: We both met him because we used to hang out with a big gang called the Larry's. Do you remember these guys? There were about twenty of them all called Larry.

Dennis: Yep. Guys brave enough to wear glitter and platform shoes.

Barrie: Yeah. You were a lead singer in a glitter band.

Dennis: Strange characters would show up, in big platform shoes. About six inches, totally glammed out, it turned out to be Nazi Dog. But back then he was Ariel. The first thing he did was bum a beer off me.

Barrie: Didn't he have an English accent?

Dennis: We all did because it was cool to be like Bowie.

MRR: I always remember back in '77 in Toronto that there seemed to be this accent that came with the punk scene that was half New York and half English, but I had never heard that explanation before.

George: Exactly. We are half way between New York and London, but that's our strength, we have one foot in London and one in North America. It causes groin strain, but it's a real boost.

Barrie: It was changing daily. It was like rules were coming out. It was like someone would make a decree "Punks have no money, therefore they don't do drugs." Really? Have a look around. These decrees would come around. Or a band would get labeled a new wave band and it would be like, "Oh no, now we have that title."

George: And give the punks credit for immediately putting down an attempted takeover by right wing skinheads. Give them credit for that. Within weeks that insurrection was put down and they were put in their place.

MRR: I never even heard of skinheads until the early '80s. I didn't really see that stuff in the punk scene. Even as a bass player Baby Oil's stage presence garnered him a lot of attention on and off the stage.

George: Yeah, when he was on bass he planted a flagpole in his ass. He claimed that space.

Dennis: He was a strange looking fellow, and large.

Barrie: But you know he was a softy, he just looked like hell. He would show up at my house dressed like Judy Garland. He would have a long white shirt on with nail polish and his eyes and hair done like Judy Garland. I opened the door and then I closed the door.

MRR: He got you guys in the promoters, the Garys' bad books. How did this come about?

Barrie: We did a gig at the Horseshoe and they were mad because two microphones had gone missing. We were reaming everybody out, we blamed the other band; I think it was the Sophisticatos or Children Of Divorce... Baby Oil later produced two microphones that he grabbed. We didn't get to do the Last Pogo. We figured it was the mics.

George: We were barred from doing the Last Pogo; that was the official record.

MRR: But you guys got a lot of great support gigs at the Horseshoe, like the Troggs and the Heartbreakers.

George: Johnny Thunders.

Barrie: Yeah. Now he was a disappointment unfortunately. All he was trying to do was bum drugs and try to steal my amp.

Dennis: They absolutely would not take the stage until they got their proper medication.

Barrie: When they got on it took them forty-five minutes to tune. When they finally played it was amazing.

Baby Oil was finally admitted to a psychiatric hospital.

Barrie: Well that was in the Toyz. Yeah.

That didn't happen after you were the Existers?

Barrie: No. He had many other adventures. In the Existers he left when there was too much amphetamines and speed. He quit, sold his bass. With the $1,200 he got he bought $300 worth of liquid speed. He hit an artery instead of a vein and had gang green. They thought they had to cut off about half of his arm, but it turned out that they cut off half a finger. That was in that era. Dennis moved over to bass after that.

MRR: Was he a changed man after he got out of the hospital?

Barrie: Naw. He was the same guy.

Dennis: Finally the needle stopped spinning and he was gone.

MRR: You guys played with the Poles at a place called the Dream Factory. Where was the Dream Factory?

George: It's in the old Goderman Woertz Building.

Barrie: It's the original Toronto jail before the Don Jail.

George: A catacomb. A rabbit hole.

Barrie: We saw these rooms that maybe if you were 5' 8" you might be able to stand in them.

Dennis: People were shorter then.

Barrie: It's turned into condos now.

MRR: You guys describe the inspiration for your songs as an optimistic celebration of street level experiences. That sounds...

George: We got kick started in that whole punk scene. We survived three years. Longer than the normal life span by far, and out of that came a lot of good songs. A lot of it came from the tension in the band. But it was a really great creative kind of moment.

MRR: The personalities of the Existers are quite different from each other. What were the pros and cons of this?

George: Well we all have the same cultural references. We weren't from different planets. We were from the same city in fact.

Barrie: Basically George and I drive each other crazy. That's the main thing.

George: But I worked some good songs out of you.

Barrie: "You could do better than that. You're lazy." You said that about "Future Shock." There was good crazy tension and it was an on-going party. We just played constantly.

George: We worked all the time. We thought that's what you had to do when you are in a band. You play shows right?

MRR: Well speaking of working, tell me about playing the Turning Point thirty nights in a row. You guys should have got an award for that.

Barrie: I have pictures of us the day after, just lying in this grass. We opened up because we didn't have a rehearsal hall, so if there was nobody there we were the headliners. We played with the Demics, we played with Sophisticatos, probably the Mods, Swollen Members. We would just leave our equipment there. We didn't miss one day for thirty days.

Dennis: I remember playing to nobody.

Barrie: We swore we would never go back.

Dennis: The owner lady, I forget her name, was passed out on the counter.

Barrie: Mrs. Joe. One night Mrs. Joe passed out on a table and she puked all over the whole table. She was lying in her puke. There was one person in the audience. It was a Sunday night and in comes a fraternity. It was some University of Toronto fraternity and all hell breaks loose. Guys with stolen toilet seats around their heads screaming and yelling. The only woman there is Steve's wife Terry, who is grabbed, and every guy wants to dance with her, with a toilet seat or not. Mrs. Joe looks up from her puke and the place is packed and her head goes back down on the table. After one set they all yell, "You suck." Then they all run out the door. She looks up again and the room is empty.

MRR: Tell me about the Mani-festival at Convocation Hall?

George: The Mani-festival was so hastily organized I never really understood what the deal was with it, but somebody said "Do you want to come and play?" It was a three day event with of a lot of New York artists. Like really diverse stuff; Fred Frith. Henry Cow. Leather Gong. Amazing stuff but there was no promotion. They just sort of laid an egg. People came and went all weekend. There would be people coming in the afternoon and the evening and leaving and coming back.

Barrie: There was a Grateful Dead concert the first day, they had velvet bell bottoms and I remember seeing Michael Jordana of the Poles, and Douglas walk in looking like black flies. They walk in this room and are surrounded by colorful hippies dancing. And then the next day it was like there were so many bands they filled the bottom part of Convocation Hall. We all just sort of played to each other.

Dennis: Yeah. No audience, just bands.

MRR: You guys were a sharply dressed band. Your image was obviously important. It seemed like you put some thought into it for sure especially when you guys got all the suits and everything. And George had one of the coolest haircuts I ever saw.

George: Goodwill was always there. I would stumble into there and get a handful of skinny ties.

Dennis: I think the ties came from Aaron's dad.

Barrie: Someone's dad died. That's how we got all the suits. And I think my mom was working for a lawyer or something and I think the guy croaked. We ended up with a bunch of suits.

George: Surplus stores were good.

Barrie: Baby Oil showed up with a bunch of suits. I'm not sure where they came from. I got one that said "Barrie Q Modern". It was a big white cardboard thing.

MRR: Paul McGrath of the *Globe and Mail* wrote a piece to describe a show at the Edge, which the Viletones Steve Leckie seemed disturbed at what he described as your new wave leanings. What do you guys think was the difference with punk and new wave back then?

George: Nobody knows where the dividing line entered between punk and new wave, but something happened. Punk became very quickly recognizable by its marks. Okay we got that figured out. What's next? Well what was next was new wave. Sharper suits in the case of the Jam, I saw Paul Weller, one of the great figures of modern music on TV at the time around '78 or '79 on the *Tom Snyder Show* and Snyder asked him 'Well Mr. Weller what's this new wave all about?' and Weller said "Well it's about unity innit?' Unity of what I don't know.

Barrie: It was almost like a date thing. If you weren't in by August 1st, 1977 you were new wave. The Toyz were called new wave. The Toyz were a raucous rock band, but we were like August the 3rd so we missed out on the cut. I just think that what happened was people just started to legitimize it. People learned a third and a fourth chord.

MRR: I thought it almost came up from a record company executive, the word new wave, to try and make punk marketable.

George: No way. When they went shopping for that label it was already out there in the streets for them, packaged and ready to go.

Barrie: But they were terrified of punk. They didn't know what to do with it. And if you listen to a lot of radio in the summer of '77 it was some of the worst music that has ever been created. *Saturday Night Fever* came out in '77, and we all thought disco was dead and punk was rocking.

MRR: Tell me about the "Telex Love" 7" single. Where was it recorded?

Barrie: We recorded in the Gatineau Hills with Stewart Smith who was really the big daddy of the Ottawa scene, they had an 8-track studio, and we traded a gig at the Rotters Club in Ottawa. It was a really cool club. They had phenomenal sound. So we would play there and then we would stay at their house and record.

MRR: Who produced the record?

Barrie: There was Stewart and the guy who played the sax, Carl.

MRR: That is not Chip playing that then?

Barrie: No that was a guy named Carl. We lost our minds. We were so raw and we went in there ,and they had a mini moog with a weird sound on it, "Yeah, great." So we put that in there and we added sax. We just got caught up in the whole studio frenzy.

MRR: How did you guys finance pressing the single? Because back then it was expensive putting out a record.

Dennis: I think we were the tax write off band.

Barrie: We got grabbed up by Eddie and Drago, we were like the naughty kids. They put it out. They pressed a thousand. They forgot to put the name Existers on it so we

had to hand stamp every one of them.

MRR: How was the record received?

Barrie: I was surprised. We got played on Q107. We play-listed. We got play-listed on 102. That was kind of neat. I remember hearing "Radar Love" and then "Telex Love" back to back and my father being there and finally going "Oh my son the guitar player. He's a bum. Punk rocker."

MRR: Was it available outside of Toronto or Canada?

Barrie: It got shipped to some oddball places. San Francisco.

Dennis: We got no support whatsoever. And then the band was breaking up.

Barrie: When Baby Oil left it wasn't the same band so we all lost spirit. We had a manager at the time Adam Break, and he disappeared and started working with the Viletones.

MRR: Were you guys approached by any major labels?

Barrie: No.

Dennis: We could see them running away.

MRR: Is there enough Existers material recorded now from back then to put a release out in the future?

Barrie: There was a guy that recorded a set at the Beverley.

MRR: So live recordings.

Barrie: It was really well done. There was also some studio stuff that we did near the end that has just gone by the wayside. When Rush were recording with Max Webster we were getting free studio time, coming in and setting our equipment up in between these monstrous drum kits. We did some songs there that were pretty good but...

MRR: You guys went to great lengths to avoid being categorized by the media.

Dennis: I know they wanted to put a sticker on our 45. A new wave sticker. We refused.

Barrie: People just didn't know what to do with us.

Dennis: We didn't want to be labeled.

MRR: And George did the cover artwork for the 7".

George: No, I screwed up the artwork. There was an artist; I think he was a French kid. We often had artists and writers just drop in at *Shades* and visit. He showed us his drawings. I appropriated one. His name is on the cover.

Dennis: Electrique O Madness.

George: I thought this would make a nice cover for the Existers record. I went and screwed it up. I put the Existers logo on the top. I should have just let the picture speak for itself.

MRR: In the last year and a half, there seems to have been a lot of interest in the first generation Toronto punk scene. Why do you think this is all of a sudden?

George: I think back to when I was a kid and I was disdainful of pop culture, as we all should be, at least at a certain level, and I would go up to Sam's and comb the third floor through their jazz and blues records. I would see records by Mississippi John Hurt and Son House and all these old guys, Muddy Waters, Magic Sam. I thought, they are old, they must be good; this must be authentic. I think that's what is happening.

Barrie: But it was a huge shift in music. It was like rock 'n' roll had just come to a complete thud. Emerson Lake And Palmer were travelling with an orchestra.

George: And the fans revived it. They revived rock 'n' roll.

Barrie: The fans put the bands together. Compared to the early '80s scene out west, where there was a much more sameness in sound, every Toronto band was completely different. But it was just that nobody seemed to have a clue. They didn't care if they could play or not, or how much of a virtuoso they were. They were just making stuff up and laying it down.

MRR: Do you think the Toronto scene got the recognition it deserved at the time?

Barrie: I think it is getting it now. I don't think it did at all back then.

Dennis: We were just a wart on the Toronto scene.

George: The music scene in Toronto changed inexorably after '77. There was no going back. Look, the rules had changed, perspectives have changed, technology has changed, everything has changed. From now on it is going to be different and you are going to use these elements, which we have provided for you, so good luck to you. Maybe in a couple of years you will have a music industry in this country. And we were right.

MRR: Scott, tell me about the last Existers gig?

Scott: How long do I have? We played in Cobaconk. Some foolish agent booked us in Cobaconk, Ontario at the corner of Highway 48 and 35 at the Paddy House. We somehow got up there. George forgot his amp.

George: I pawned my guitar because I needed some money to live on.

Scott: We had a sound crew that came with us, and I remember it just didn't feel right. There were farmers playing billiards in the back. We did our sound check and the lady behind the bar that ran the place said "I hope that's not what you're going to play all weekend. Do you guys know any Elvis?" and we all looked at each other like "Oh my God."

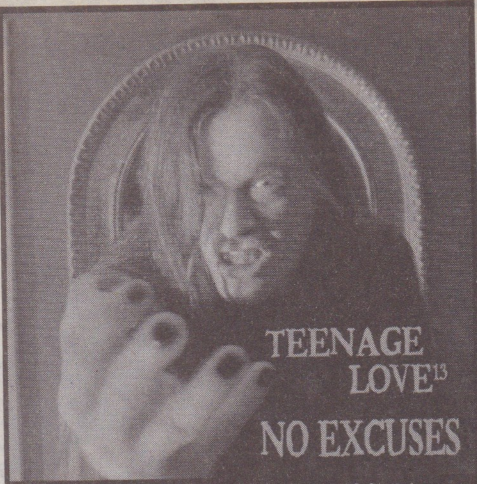
Dennis: Sure lady, we know lots of Elvis.

Scott: We play the first night and I don't remember how many nights we actually did.

Barrie: But we had signed a contract that would give us four sets of forty or fifty minutes each. We did our first set of thirty-five minutes or whatever it is, and the guy finds us and goes, "Now you must do an extra twenty five minutes." We had to repeat every single song.

Scott: I remember after our first set we had little hotel rooms they gave us to sit in in-between sets, and we went upstairs and someone said you better come down there's someone stealing your equipment and there was a band called the Lindsay Huns that were from Lindsay, Ontario, and these guys had come in to watch us. In between our sets they took all our mics so we couldn't play. The sound guys that we hired for the weekend called the cops. That was the last Existers weekend.

Barrie: No. Then we drove home and ran out of gas. I tried to cut off a hose from an air pump and suck gas out into my mouth, get a siphon going and fill up. We couldn't do it. We fell asleep in the car. We all had horrible breath. It doesn't taste good and you wake up in the morning and you have pimples all over your face from the gasoline. Oh that was enough.



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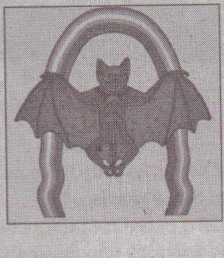

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N.N

Interview by: Layla Gibbon and Cissie Scurlock.
All photos by: Mike Santos

MRR: Where are all of you originally from, and how did you end up living in San Francisco?

Jose: I was born and raised in Salinas, CA, which is a farmworking community about two hours south of San Francisco. My parents worked in the fields all their lives. I moved to San Francisco to start a Master's program in ethnic studies, but I grew up around music. I always believed that music was a sacred energy, and when used in the right way you could do really cool things with it. So when I moved up here, I started jamming out with friends and eventually stopped going to school so I could play music, work, and pay rent and all that.

Martin: Guillo isn't here tonight—he's from Medellín, Colombia.

Jose: He moved here in 2002 or so, like seven years ago. He was doing a US tour with a band he was in (Mojiganga) and they had plans to record in San Francisco. Because of everything that was going on in Colombia, he decided to stay here. Since then he's gone to school and works, and we became really, really close friends, like brothers.

Martin: I was born in Uruguay, raised in Chicago, and I came to San Francisco after a horrible break-up in Santa Ana. I didn't know the other N.N. guys when I moved here. It was kind of weird how we came together.

Augustine: I was born in Honduras and I moved to the States in '79 when I was 14; I moved to the suburbs of Hayward, CA with my dad. I went to high school there and played some music randomly with friends. I moved to San Francisco about 25 years ago. I played music with people from school—we had some alternative, punk, and metal bands in the '90s. Through playing with those bands I started running into Jose and eventually met Martin. And that's where we are now.

MRR: How did you guys meet?

Martin: I was in this really fucked-up sort of depression when I moved here because of the separation from my partner in Southern California. I was trying to acclimate to all the change that was happening. A mutual friend named Bolillo asked if I planned on starting a band in town, but I told him that I wasn't ready. I wasn't prepared to do music yet. He said to let him know when I was ready because he'd introduce me to the right people. One of the first people that he introduced me to was Jose. We connected and became friends. Then I met Augustine who was awesome. And the crazy thing about it was that we were all coming from a really kind of fucked time in our lives. We came into the band really slowly, but we were all like, "Let's do this." We all understood where one another was coming from because we were all coming from a dark period. We all fit in that way.

MRR: Do you think that's reflected in the music?

Jose: Yeah it is, just the energy of getting together and jamming out or writing. You can definitely see it in the lyrics. For me it's been a very healing experience.

Martin: I think it definitely comes through both lyrically and musically. There's melody, but some of the parts are kind of dark. To me, that's what I associate it with—the sort of Latin American blues. That darkness comes through and, like Jose says, it's healing—for me, punk has been that. If I relied on the rest of

What can we create now?
What can we create now?
What can we create now?

my life I probably wouldn't exist. But through punk, and the energy that we give to it and what it gives back, it's allowed us to grow and heal. Most people are gonna read this and be like, "Is he fucking crazy? It's just a band." But no, it's not; it's *not* just a band, it's *not* just jamming out.

MRR: Do you have difficulties playing shows due to your schedules or other obligations?
Martin: We all work crazy jobs. Augustine is a postal worker, Jose is a social worker, Guillo does video production, and I'm a full-time teacher. These are all jobs or careers that are very time-consuming, but the music is something that *has* to happen. It's where we find balance. We make time for it, but it gets tricky because we have different schedules. So sometimes if Jose and I both have a night off he'll come over and we'll work on ideas—I'll hum a song that I've had in my head and have him play it on guitar…

MRR: Are you two the main songwriters?
Jose: Usually, but when we all come together we share our ideas and everybody adds to it.
Martin: I'm the weird guy that walks down the street humming into my phone because I have a song idea in my head, and then I play it back to the guys and it's embarrassing. But that's the way we write some of our songs and it works for us. Our schedules are complicated and it kind of gets in the way of what we really want to do, but we manage. We're not a touring band. We would like to do more shows, and eventually we will.

MRR: I was wondering how you guys first discovered underground punk music when you were younger.
Jose: I grew up in a farm community, so when I was younger we listened to a lot of *corridos*—Spanish music that's telling our history through the songs. We were listening to rock 'n' roll too and a little bit of everything. I grew up in an environment where there were a lot of gangs. But when I was in middle school I had a really good friend with a brother who was going to school at Berkeley. He got accepted as a result of affirmative action through a program that was for first-generation lower-income college-bound students, and he was a punk. We were kind of in awe of him because where we're from, people mock someone like that. He would come home with Misfits stuff and Spanish punk like Eskorbuto, and we were like, "this is fucking bad-ass." The lyrics were talking about our reality and it empowered us. He started a band, and the equipment was so expensive that he wouldn't let us touch it, but when he wasn't there we would try to figure out how to plug everything in and eventually we started a band. For me, it saved me from gangbanging. We were punks, which in a sense made us invisible. We could go anywhere and nobody would mess with us. We would play house parties and people would trip out, but the punk community was very small in Salinas back then.

MRR: What years was this happening?
Jose: It was '88 and '89 and the scene consisted of like two bands.
Martin: I think that's where Plain Jane and the Jokes were from.
Jose: I was in middle school and some band would be playing at the high school, so we'd leave our school and go check out the show.
Martin: I can't remember the question…

MRR: How did you discover punk?
Martin: My exposure to punk was through my cousins that lived in New York. They were old punks. That's where I first heard the Ramones, the Runaways, the Sex Pistols, and the Clash, because they had all the records. I saw Joan Jett and the Blackhearts in like early '81, which was cool to see, but I wouldn't consider that my first show. The first sort of DIY band that I ever saw was Naked Raygun at the end of '84. I was always fascinated by punk and drawn to it. I thought, "I'm gonna be this someday." I lived in Chicago during that mid-'80s scene and I dove in.
Augustine: When I first moved to California in 1979, the Nicaraguan Revolution had just happened. There was Canto Nuevo Movement in Latin America to talk about what was happening in the countries… At some point I started seeing flyers when I was visiting San Francisco.

The first show that I recall going to in San Francisco was at the On Broadway—Fifth Column, Executioner and I think Verbal Abuse headlined. I saw Personality Crisis at the On Broadway right around the same time. I started going to the Rough Trade record shop. The very first record that really caught my attention was the MDC *Multi-Death Corporations* 7" because when you opened it up it said "El Pueblo Unido Jamas Sera Vencido" ("The people united will never be divided"). This was a very common slogan in South America, and for the first time I saw that there was awareness of what was happening in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, and I never turned back after that. Ironically it was through MDC, a band from San Francisco, but eventually I ran into all the bands from Spain and bands like Crass that were very aware. I realized that bands from England and Europe were much more conscious than bands here, but through the punk thing bands here were eventually getting the same information. Basically what I noticed was that in punk there was awareness of what was really going on in Latin America, but in the suburbs where I lived, people were just getting their information from TV. You know, "Reagan's freedom fighters" and people had the idea that things were bad down there, but they weren't really concluding what was happening. I was getting information through the mail from my family, but I also found a link to the information through these bands. There was a culture here that was not only about creating music, but also about informing themselves about what was happening.

MRR: Jose, did your relationship to punk influence your decision to become a social worker?
Jose: Definitely. I gotta work to pay my bills and eat, but for me, I had to choose a job where I was helping out the community, or else I couldn't live with myself. Fortunately, I've been able to do that by working for a public health plan in the outreach

department. We do trainings and presentations about public health programs in San Francisco. In the city, there are programs for everyone regardless of income and immigration status. If you live in San Francisco, there is a public health program that allows anyone to seek medical services and preventative care. You don't have to wait for an emergency or go to urgent care and wait for hours.

MRR: Martin, what about you and teaching?
Martin: Punk has influenced everything that I've done. Being a teacher makes sense to me and it's connected. All those peace punk and revolutionary lyrics I've heard throughout the years play a role every day. The school is not a punk environment, but the basis for what I do in my lesson plans and what I want to teach my students stems from my history.

MRR: I remember when you were student teaching last year and all those punk girls were coming to shows.
Martin: Yeah, I was working at an alternative high school and there were a lot of punks. Some of them bussed across the country to go see Limp Wrist at Chaos In Tejas. That's not happening at the school I teach at now. There aren't many punks at my school.

MRR: It relates to that idea of creating something to give back to the rest of the punks so they can create something, and that's sort of what you are talking about with your work as well.
Martin: You have to keep in mind that a lot of kids in LA and Chicago come from neighborhoods where their options are very limited. You can be a gangbanger *or* you get into punk. When you talk to kids in LA they'll tell you that. The idea of giving and receiving is really evident when you have these limited options. I know plenty of punks that have a relative or more in prison. Their families don't want their kids to be gangbangers, so they encourage them to get into punk or rockabilly or anything alternative. That's how a lot of kids get into it and a lot of that sort of exchange has to happen.

MRR: Today, is there a specific scene in San Francisco or even outside that you feel N.N. is connected to?
Martin: I think sometimes there's a connection and other times a disconnect. I think with N.N. we're not plugging into a scene or connecting with other bands, but rather with individuals. In Chicago and Southern California it was easier to connect to this larger scene and there was more of a community thing that happened around the bands. I must say that San Francisco is a little devoid of that. With N.N. we hope that people in town will come out and connect with what we're doing. San Francisco is a strange place—it may have to do with the economics of the city. It's not the same place that it was twenty years ago. The scene is an older one and there are not many young people. You may see some younger people at a show, but you will never see them again except maybe at another show. The community aspect doesn't seem to exist.
Jose: I think part of it has to do with the lack of all-ages venues in San Francisco.
Augustine: I think the all-ages thing is very crucial. Gilman is very important to the Bay Area. When I read Martin's lyrics, I think that it's crucial that younger people get into it. I think it's very important to look for a way to make all-ages shows happen more often. Instead of playing three bar shows, I think if we can play one all-ages show, it's worth the sacrifice. I'm not saying someone is going to read N.N. lyrics and start a revolution, but sometimes it's a point of view that someone has never seen before. It's really crucial to project this message, and also to find a way to congregate with people.

MRR: Everybody was talking about the show you guys recently played at the Flower Shop [a warehouse space in SF] and saying it was the best show of the year—that was at an all-ages space…
Martin: It was really cool. But again, a lot of the folks at that show were from LA. There were quite a few Bay people there, but I don't know how they take to it. Is it just another show or what? We get asked to go to LA or Watsonville and it seems like a different kind of vibe there—people connect to it in a different way. It's not just another punk show. Not that I'm trying to value one over the other, but it makes you feel like what you're doing has more validity to it when it's not just entertainment, and it's not just another show. I'm not here for the rock 'n' roll. When you say you're a punk, that's such a charged word. Still to me when someone says they're a punk, it means that you're taking a stand and you mean something by it. You don't just throw it around loosely. We did a presentation in the Mission [SF neighborhood] for this non-profit organization and they showed my video [*Beyond The Screams: A US Latino Hardcore Punk Documentary*]. Me, Jose, and Carlitos from Boom Boom Kid went and there were all these young kids. N.N. played that weekend and a group of kids from the presentation came to the show. Not enough of that sort of thing is happening to invite new people and local people. Enough punk happens in the Mission, but not a lot of the local people that might be interested in it know about it. It's in a sort of bubble. I think there are people that would be interested in underground culture and music and art, but they're not exposed to it. In a certain sense, we as punks use it to protect ourselves because we hate being overexposed and used, but it harms us in another way. Every punk has a story of being young and seeing punk for the first time and being

like, "Whoa. What is that? I wanna see more. I wanna be a part of this." I feel like it gets harder and harder for young people these days to have that experience.

MRR: With that in mind, did you have any intentions when you put out the record?
Jose: For me it was an accomplishment of putting all that baggage and darkness behind. It was like: this friendship and energy that we created, here it is. Seeing it, I couldn't believe it, because of the dark place that I was coming from. We made 600 copies just to see what would happen with it. We were all really proud of it and friends that heard it really liked it. A lot of friends were like "Oh shit. This is *punk*. I haven't heard stuff like this in a long time." It was really good to hear that.
Martin: For me, I've been running the label for so long, and I really believe in documenting stuff. I wasn't sure how people would react to it, because it's really different from anything I've done before. With Lengua Armada I normally release hardcore and N.N. is sort of tied to hardcore, but it's more punk, so we did a smaller pressing just to see how it would go. With the artwork, we had a concept. It doesn't look like a punk record; it's sort of anonymous and it's hard to tell what it's about. It just looks like photography flyer or something.

MRR: It seems like a lot of bands at the moment are drawing from old Spanish punk.
Martin: There's a shift happening. For the longest time, hardcore, thrash, and grind were king. There was a distance from the rootsy, old Spanish punk stuff. Now there's a bunch of new bands popping up that are drawing from those influences. I hear a lot of kids saying, "I'm sick of grind. I want to hear *punk* again." There's great stuff that's coming. It's not like bands are trying to mock or imitate anything—they don't need to mock because they've lived it.
Jose: At that Flower Shop show, a bunch of us were talking about how it was very refreshing to hear this new stuff. There was a sense of this new scene that was being created. The people from LA were talking about how it was important to stop thinking about the past and to live in the now. What are we doing now? What can we create now? It was very magical.
Martin: Most people that read this interview are gonna think, "What are these guys on? What are they talking about?"

MRR: What are the names of the LA bands that played that Flower Shop show?
Martin: Rayos X and Tuberculosis. A band called Kruel was supposed to play as well, and Mundo Muerto played a few days later. These are people who do the backyard shows in East LA and some of them were in other bands like Hit Me Back, so now you have different generations of punk scene happening at the same time. The drummer and vocalist of Tuberculosis are really young, like 17 or 18, and then you have Augustine who's 43 and I'm 41. We are totally against the mentality of "Back in my day…" We hate it. Fuck that elitist garbage. There've been bands with people from Latin America playing the straight 1-2-1-2 punk stuff forever. A lot of the bands got overlooked because it wasn't considered cool. And a lot of the people in these bands are migrants, so they don't get asked to play shows, and they'll play to their friends at their practice space and that's it. In Mexico, even when Crudos went, there were countless bands playing punk—not thrash or grind or hardcore, but punk. It's always existed, but now it's more in vogue to play punk and get more to the roots. It's awesome, there's good stuff.

MRR: We heard N.N. played a show in some garage in Oakland. What was the deal with that?
Martin: That was at this East Oakland parking garage underneath an apartment building, and they put on this crazy show with us, Outraged, Disfuntos, Matarata. It was this crazy East Oakland Latino punk show.
Augustine: That place during the day is a Latino legal center. It's a bit of a community center and they have ESL classes and give advice to immigrants.
Martin: But the show wasn't legal. [*laughter*]

MRR: Was it mostly punks watching or did people that were going to their cars stop and watch?
Martin: There were families going home that stopped and were like, "What the hell is going on?"
Jose: People would walk by and come in and check it out.
Martin: Yeah, it wasn't a strictly punk crowd at all. It was crazy.

MRR: Does the name N.N. have a specific meaning?
Martin: N.N. basically means "unidentifiable." We were originally deciding between N.N. or N.T.N. During the dictatorship era in South America, when bodies would appear or wash up on shore, they couldn't identify the people so they would be tagged "N.N." It turns out it's a very common punk band name in Latin America and Spain. I kind of like that idea of not knowing what it is or who it is. It's not easily identifiable. It's super vague and people are like "N.N., what it is that?"
Jose: The name is perfect because we have people in these institutions that try to control us. For people of color we're taught this history about who we are, and it's a form of controlling the youth from developing

an identity. With this band we're telling this story about who we are, and with the name we're kind of throwing it back to those people. Also, someone might see the name and identify with it like Augustine did with the MDC record.

Martin: I like that it's sort of anonymous and vague. You can't easily search for N.N. on the internet.

Augustine: It took us awhile to get there, but eventually it was like we all knew that N.N. was the name of the band. I like that it means no name, no tags, no nothing. It's kind of how Malcolm X used the X. The system told him he was a nobody, so he used the X in reaction to that. N.N. really means no name.

Martin: Also, we know there's an N.N. in Mexico and probably Spain, and if anyone complained to us about using the name, I could care less. There could just be a blank on the record; I don't give a shit about the name. If we could just show up and play, I wouldn't care if there were a name to it. We're just doing what we do.

MRR: How does it feel playing a show with 17-year-old kids and being so much older? Do you get kids looking up to you?

Martin: I don't think they look up to us. It's a balance; we look at each other straight in the eye and we deal with each other. I think that's the beauty of it. There's no hierarchy of bands. We're equals.

Augustine: I talked to those bands from LA at the Flower Shop show and let them know that what they were doing was a responsibility that we all have to our community, and to use music in the right way—to tell a story. They were all like, "That's why we're doing this." It's a common agreement. *I* was the one telling *them* that I have respect for them. I said, "You guys taught *me* something today." The 17-year-old vocalist for Tuberculosis—this is her first band and that was her second show, so I told her, "What you are doing is so powerful. I admire it so much and you have to continue. Believe in yourself and what you're saying."

Martin: And they need to hear that. That vocalist is doing something new in her life, so they need that support. I know that there are kids in that band going through really fucked up stuff. To have somebody that they may view in a different way say, "It's so awesome to see you doing this" is a validation and it brings them up. I don't need to hear it because I've heard it enough, but it's time to give it back to these younger kids and treat them as equals. That's the balance, again, which is amazing about that scene in particular. I really feel like people will read this and be confused by it because it's not the standard. I'm not about the standard and this band's not about the standard. There's "rock 'n' roll" and there's "punk" and we're *punks*. There's that cycle of giving back...

Augustine: I think with those kids from LA, they're all friends and they bring more friends to the show. I hope that in the long run, more of them will get inspired. Someone might think that their friend is better because he can play an instrument, but eventually if they still hang around in that circle, five or ten years from now, the people that didn't think that they had something to say will have a band. Sometimes I feel awkward, like, "What am I doing here…"

Jose: He was crowd-surfing that night! The oldest one there was the one that was crowd-surfing. [*laughter*]

Martin: I have photos to prove it! I was like, "Get the stretcher."

Augustine: I'll surf all I'll want. I'm celebrating what they're doing because it's inspiring. I felt awkward about playing. The more of them I see and the more people that know each other, the more bands I see that start. At one point or another when you're in that kind of reality, eventually people have the confidence to say what's on their mind instead of getting fucked up or getting angry. Six months later maybe there'll be five bands and then twenty bands. They've found a voice and place, and eventually that becomes a movement. So I thought about getting on stage after this 17-year-old's band and I thought, "thank god for Gauze." [*laughter*]

MRR: What's the craziest show that you've ever been to?

Jose: I was at a show in Mexico City. I walked in and went straight to the front; there was no stage. The show was in a downtown area and there were these cops on horses. All of a sudden, a bunch of the punks went to the door and closed it. There was a struggle between the cops and the kids because the cops were trying to shut the show down and the kids wouldn't let them. The kids were standing on stools and yelling at the cops. Eventually the kids turned off the lights and everyone quieted down. The cops left and the show went on. If that were here, the show would've ended when the cops came. It was great to see that and it was really intense. This was in like 2002. That's one of many crazy shows.

Augustine: There used to be this warehouse in San Francisco that would have hip hop and punk shows and whatnot, and I can't remember who was playing, but it was pretty high energy. There were punks with dogs that got into the show. There was a pretty healthy pit going and kids were diving, and all of a sudden the *dogs* were in the pit. [*laughter*] It was like all hell broke loose. Eventually people were jumping onstage, trying to get away from the dogs. I don't think it actually got settled because people would grab their dogs and calm them down, but then it was like, "When will that start again?" The show went on, but it wasn't as fun. It was different kind of security that came in and took care of business.

MRR: Do you guys have any other plans?

Martin: We're recording another 7" this month, but that's all we have planned.

Grass Widow

Grass Widow are an all female punk band from San Francisco, whose sound is at once unique and clearly their own, yet harkens back to the art and adventure of the many female fronted groups of the early eighties post-punk era. They are touring the US this summer so check them out when they hit your town!
Interview by Jess Scott

MRR: Let's get all logistics out of the way, your name, your instruments, when you started playing music together, what's your favorite neighborhood in San Francisco, etc...
Hannah Lew: Bass. My favorite neighborhood in SF is the Richmond District. I grew up there.
Lily Maring: I play drums. We started playing together when I filled in on drums for their previous band, Shitstorm. Fourth member Wu left the Bay Area for a while, Shitstorm was done. Then the three of us started writing songs together. This was in the fall of 2007.
Raven Mahon: There is a strip of houseboats near the ballpark that I've been visiting since I moved here five years ago. It's my favorite place in SF. I play guitar, which I picked up a long time ago but it wasn't until Grass Widow that it felt right. I also mess around with the trumpet.

MRR: You guys are always getting called San Francisco's Raincoats, and eyes roll like a wave through the band, so how would you describe your sound?
Hannah: For the record–I wasn't rolling my eyes. I was just looking up at the ceiling to see if it was worth it to move my whole head. I love the Raincoats. I don't think we sound like them, though it is flattering.
Lily: Maybe I was squinting because I haven't listened to the Raincoats all that much. It's not the first time I've seriously listened to a band or artist after having been compared to them and thought, 'I guess I can see that.'
Raven: I really like the Raincoats as well, but I don't hear a strong resemblance. I think it's an easy connection to make, harmonies and female band members and all...

MRR: The early women-centered DIY/post-punk reference is very applicable though, how conscious are you of the bands that you draw from? Which bands are inseparable elements to Grass Widow?
Hannah: We really draw from a wide range of music. I love the Neo Boys, Liliput, and the Petticoats, etc. But I also love The Move, Kaleidoscope (UK), Flower Traveling Band, *Strummin Mental* (awesome instrumental surf compilation). I guess that's why I roll my eyes (fine, I admit it) at the Raincoats reference. It feels reductive since our references are so all over the place. Raven listens to freaking classical music!
Raven: Freaking? I played saxophone in band in middle school and had the Jurassic Park solo, that's all. My mom and I used to go on road trips and she forced her 12-tape collection of classical composers down my throat, so i think it made an impression. Sometimes I do think that I would like to replicate a sound I like, but the nature of our songwriting doesn't lend itself to that kind of process. In the end, it's a more intuitive and impulsive.
Lily: I don't like citing specific references because I rarely listen to a band and think: "This is it. This is what I want to sound like." There are elements of music that touch me and absorb themselves into my subconscious pool of resources, and recently I've begun to study certain genres to influence my songwriting. Still, I don't want to do that too much. I like it to be mostly intuitive.
Hannah: It's true. Our song writing process is not very derivative

or formulaic. I'd say our biggest inspiration comes from one another. We just make music about what's going on with us.

MRR: Grass Widow's sound is so vast though, it's low/dark, high/light, a really fascinating harmony palette held together by dis-harmonic pieces. The common thread is tension; everything is always about to explode at the end of each progression. What other styles of music have you drawn upon, and what artists outside of punk or music have furthered your songwriting?

Hannah Lew: Gamalan

Lily Maring: Lester Horton, Natalie Wood's bathtub scene in *Splendor in the Grass*.

Raven Mahon: Rachmaninoff.

MRR: One of the really great, under-rated components about all-girl bands is that you really don't draw upon music in a directly influential way like male musicians do. Women's music/art/punk in 2009 does have roots, (i.e. those pesky Raincoats comparisons), but because women are still not encouraged to create, there is this innate grappling around in the dark, in a void, for their sound, their roots, and what will come out of their collectivity. I find that your amazing cover of "Black Hole" by the Urinals harks to this point. Why did you choose to cover that song and what do you feel were the commonalities between you and them?

Lily: About the grappling...yeah, the darkness is real. I think it is something specific to a lot of female musicians and early punk bands alike. People who pick up instruments because they have to express a feeling, not just to re-articulate something to showcase their expansive understanding of art or music. Amazing things come from scary places where people have been oppressed by something. You can't always be too intentional or methodical about how you deal with darkness. There's soul-searching and guesswork. Sometimes what comes out is really powerful. "Black Hole" is a powerful song.

Hannah: I love that song. Actually, I love that whole Urinals album. Also I think about outer space and quantum physics a lot—so the lyrics really resonate with me. I usually look to science when I'm having a hard time with "reality." Their harmony on that song is so beautiful, too. I'm really interested in that moment where darkness turns into light. And I find myself constantly practicing that alchemy, sharpening that skill. Through our music we've found a constructive way to describe our experiences. We also have a song about Star Wars. Maybe it would be easier if all our songs were about boys.

Raven: It's difficult to verbalize the feeling of playing music that truly soothes your soul, but for me this is it and it is not at all a cerebral activity, it is emotional and tactile and the influences and sources of it come from many subjects and many depths.

MRR: There are a few very distinct qualities that make your music recognizable—particularly Raven's quasi-surf guitar, which drives your songs back to a tangible foundation for all these wild drums and multi-layered vocal harmonies. Raven, can you talk about what sort of pedals/guitars/amps you use? Do your songs build upon the guitar usually? You've talked about how the vocals/instruments/lyrics all come together equally from each of you, but is there a method you've come up with over time?

Lily: The songs that have come together the smoothest are usually started with two of us. Like if Hannah and Raven work out a series of tunes on bass and guitar, a good basic structure, then I can come in later with percussive ideas. Or I'll start with an interesting drum part and the guitar parts are written to accommodate the rhythm. A lot of times we rip a song apart and put it back together millions of times. Vocals come last and we'll sit down with our scrap paper and have brainstorms for lyrics.

Raven: Yeah, it's happened in a few ways. For example, I was living in New Mexico recently and recorded a couple things with garage band for Hannah and Lily. They took various parts and added them to something else they created, sent it back and I filled in the blanks with the rest of the guitar part. We wrote the lyrics when I got back to SF, or haphazardly recorded a melody on a voicemail. As for the surf style: it's fun and I'd like to get better at it. I use an old Fender 75 tube amp and a Boss distortion pedal. I'd like to develop both sides of the spectrum in the future and play with heavier distortion and some more reverb.

MRR: I remember you all talking about how you would make each other mix tapes a lot, especially in the beginning of the band, how come you did that? Who made the best ones? Tell us one of the most important bands you discovered through these tapes? Can I get in on this swap?

Hannah: Sure. Make me a mix tape.

Raven: Hannah made me my favorite mix tape. She wins.

MRR: You've recently finished an LP that's due out any minute on San Francisco's Make A Mess Records. Where/how did you record this? Is it a pretty chronological selection of songs?

Hannah: Winston Goertz Giffin recorded the songs. It is a pretty chronological album. Actually the first track, "To Where" is the first song we ever wrote together.

MRR: Why did you choose to do an LP instead of the more traditional 7" single debut?

Raven: The phases of our songwriting, because of extenuating circumstances and the natural development of the band, have been divided along some specific lines for us. So this way of releasing our songs seems appropriate.

MRR: Do you have other releases coming out?

Hannah: Yes! We recorded four songs (including said Urinals cover) at "The Pool" in Portland in January. We're gonna release them as a 7" by August on the Cake Shop in-house label.

Lily Maring: The person who recorded us is Alex Yusimov. It's his "Pool", which is a sea foam green recording studio. Very nice.

MRR: You have toured quite a bit, especially considering you haven't had more than a cassette out, what is the touring/live show component to GW—its importance, its similarities and differences to the recording process?

Raven: We all really like touring/playing live shows and meeting other bands. It's really satisfying to meet and be inspired by other musicians and people doing amazing things all over the country. Earlier this year we played with Purple Rhinestone Eagle in Portland and that really left an impression. Although I personally enjoy the recording process and being able to share the music that way, playing a live show is more akin to the feeling of creating the song, so I think the heart is more present in the moment.

Hannah: We like to record songs as soon as they're ready. Sometimes I make mistakes while we're recording and then it sounds cool, so I start always playing that part that way. Pretty much every time we're practicing or playing a show I go into a kind of catharsis.

Lily: When the crowd's going the shows can be like a big sweat frenzy, but when we're recording we get to concentrate on subtleties that aren't always present in a live set. It's important we get that message across the way we want it. And like Hannah said, sometimes they morph when recorded, because we can take a step back and hear everything for the first time.

MRR: What's a grass widow?

Hannah: A woman whose husband is always gone, but not dead. Like he's not in the dirt yet, just wading in the grass. It was a term used in the turn of the century for a sailor's wife. It's also a flower with three stamens!

Lily: When we were throwing out name ideas Hannah said 'Grass Widow' to me over the phone and I thought of a field. '"Widow" is dark and beautiful to me. I thought they had potential for people to have their own interpretations within the theme of nature and womanhood...but I guess a lot of people hear "grass" and think, "weed." Haha

MRR: You have been on something of a mini-hiatus. What's the update for the Grass Widow fan club? Are you each living in San Francisco now? What's the plan?

Hannah: The plan is to be together forever. We went on hiatus because Lily and I both had really tragic family emergencies, which is really sad, and makes us appreciate our collaborative relationship so much! Raven is in China until mid-April. We talk and write to each other almost everyday. We're going to play some shows in the Bay Area in April. Also we're going to go to the East Coast in the summer.

Raven Mahon: Breaking up with Grass Widow would be like removing a limb.

Lily: Lately I've been reading about bands or performers and watching documentaries where hard times come along and people aren't supported or get ditched entirely, like...left to die alone. I don't know if it's that people care more about their own fame than supporting each other or what, but it's such a bummer. In the last few months we've all three had some serious challenges. Grass Widow is always the light at the end of the tunnel.

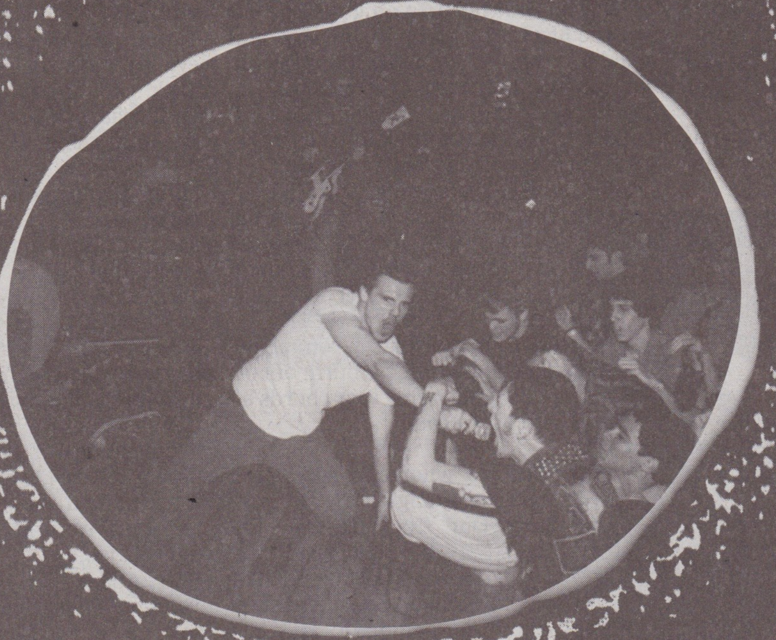
MRR: What do you do on Sundays?

Hannah: I work at Lost Weekend Video.

Raven: I make things out of wood.

Lily: Solve riddles.

CULT RITUAL



A hardcore band that has a sound manipulated by varying infuences outside the usual hardcore/punk sphere renews punk's threat. Unpredictability is an asset that few bands have these days, but Cult Ritual can be counted among those that continue to do what's not expected. They've released three 7" EPs, two demo cassettes, and have an upcoming album on Youth Attack Records. They perform live with an intensity matched by no other in recent memory, and I challenge anyone who hasn't seen them to do just that—see them, and then tell me if they know of another band that plays with as much originality, urgency, or honesty. An interview with this band is long overdue, so on February 12th, I managed to make the drive to Tampa and talk to the band in the crawlspace at Heinrich's, their practice/showspace located in a storage warehouse.

Intro and Interview by John Fahy.

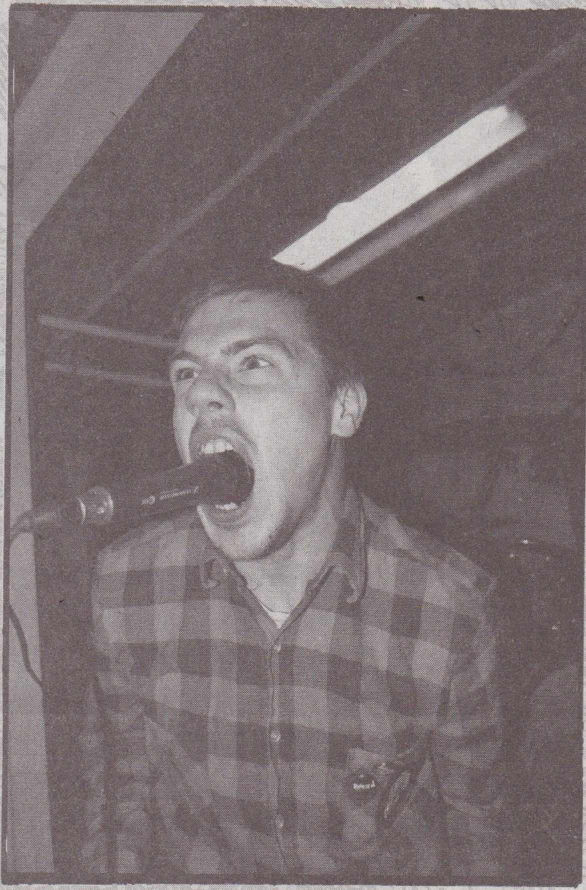
Photos by Dale Nixon

MRR: Ok, first your names and what you do.
Dave: I'm Dave and I play guitar.
Tommy: I'm Tommy, I play drums.
Dan: I'm Dan, I play the vocals.
Zack: Zachariah, I play bass.

MRR: All of you were in Tampa-area bands beforehand, and when those bands broke up it seemed like there was a whole array of new bands and projects getting together, like Tommy, you were in Death Jungle Death…so why did Cult Ritual stay around when those other bands just kind of fizzled out?
Dave: Out of necessity.
Tommy: You know, we're completely different people than our previous band mates—aloof and pessimistic—so we kind of got together that way.

MRR: Did anyone ever say something like, "We're gonna start a band, let's sound like (blank)?"
Tommy: Yeah actually, [*pointing to Dan*] you deny it, but I thought we were originally going for a Heresy sound.
Dan: I said that?
Tommy: Somebody said it.
Dan: I think I remember that too, I said I wanted it to be really fast.
Dave: And I remember we were trying to have it sound more like Poison Idea, more straightforward hardcore.
Zack: There was a whole pool of bands we were all listening to a lot at the time, but when me and Dave were driving back from Texas…
Dave: Yeah, and we decided, "We need to start this hardcore band."
Zack: And I was like, "You rule at guitar, and *My War* rules my life."
Tommy: There was a period where we all just sat in our rooms, watched *Apocalypse Now*, and listened to the B-side of *My War*. That was around the time we started Cult Ritual.
Dave: Black Flag brings us together and keeps us together.
Dan: [*looking at tape recorder*] Don't put that in there. [*laughter*] People get so hung up on this Black Flag stuff. I mean, obviously, it was an important band that sticks out in your memory because it was different, but people don't know how to categorize things, so they hear something that has dissonant guitar solos and crazy vocals and they want to call it Black Flag-derived, because they can't look past their nose and think of a better, less boring way to put it. Personally, I don't think we sound anything like Black Flag. I mean, isn't that just the basic formula for abrasive music? People are such squares about that shit.

MRR: The first record you guys put out got the Black Flag comparison a lot, and maybe got noted as being '80s revival, but that kind of stopped after that.
Zack: Well, around that time, we all collectively started getting into "weirder" stuff, like early Sonic Youth, Swans...
Dave: Yeah, Jesus Lizard…
Tommy: Scratch Acid, definitely. We would hang out and tell each other about bands we happened to get into that week.
Zack: It was like a coming-of-age thing where we burnt out on playing the same four chords as fast as we could.



MRR: So when did you guys start practicing?
Zack: Our first practice was August 16th, 2006, and our first show was Halloween 2006. We played two shows, and then we did the demo. We gave Mr. Suren [Bob Suren, Sound Idea/ Burrito Records] the demo after our fifth show with Seasick from New Jersey. Then we played in front of the Brandon Regional Library…
Dave: New Years Day.
Zack: And that week he emailed us saying, "I would love to do the 7"." He caught us before we got all combat and shit. [*laughs*]

MRR: When that first record came out, it got a decent amount of attention and there were some really good reviews.
Zack: Al Quint's review was so flattering. I really liked it because it didn't name-drop any bands.

MRR: How and when did the connection with Mark from Youth Attack! come about?
Tommy: We went on our first tour in the winter of '07/'08, and we'd been friends/ penpals with these guys in Salvation for a couple of years. We stayed with them, and Matt Adis was like, "Hey if you want to give me an extra tape, I'll give it to Mark." They put out a 7" on Youth Attack! earlier that year.
Zack: And Mark had heard our first 7". Shortly after we got back from tour, he got a hold of us and said, "I really like what you're doing, what do you want to do?" Initially we wanted to do a 10".
Dave: Yeah, we had a second demo that we recorded just before that winter tour, and we pretty much just wanted to re-record that and release it as a 10".
Zack: But we were planning on touring again in the coming summer, and he told us he couldn't get a 10" out by then, so we did a 7".

MRR: So, you're going to do an LP with him too, obviously you like working with him.
Tommy: For the most part he sees eye-to-eye with what we're doing.
Zack: It's easy. He's usually very enthusiastic about ideas…and willing to put forth the money.

MRR: Any regrets about the 7" costing eight bucks?
Dave: It was, actually, I want to say, eleven dollars.
Zack: I like the way it sounds. I love the packaging.
Dave: Yeah, I love the way it looks and I like the way it sounds. If you're going to talk shit, you know, don't buy it.
Dan: I wish we could've gotten more people to hear it. People complained that no one in Florida got it. We got them on the road and we sold them as cheap as we could. We sold them for like three or four bucks…
Dave: And we lost money.
Tommy: We got them in Brooklyn, and we sold out in Syracuse, New York, so that was three or four shows.
Dan: I would almost say I wished more were pressed too, but you've got to realize that we thought 500 would be more than enough. People like to get cranky and say we're "art fags" because we've got a limited record pressing of 500, but there were 1000 of our first record and there are still plenty of them. We did not expect it to sell like that. Not to mention, no one would have wanted to dish in the money and effort to put out twice as many of those records in one press. Each cover was cut out with an X-acto knife by hand…and some wonder why the thing costs over five dollars. They don't even know what it looks like.

MRR: How many records did you get for tour?
Tommy: That was fifty.
Dave: The thing with that record is that it's more than just a 7"; it's a whole package.
Tommy: Yeah, people got what they paid for. I've bought records that cost that much, or more, and they look like shit. And that one comes with an 18" x 24" poster.

MRR: Yeah, that's something I wanted to get into...who did all of the artwork on that record/poster?
Dan: I did all the artwork.

MRR: And did you do the first record's art too?
Dan: Yes.

MRR: But on the third record, on Drugged Conscience, you didn't do the cover, but you did the booklet, right?
Dan: No, that's all Zack.
Zack: That record, fucking Donaldson [*laughs*], told us it was going to be out before tour, so I was a little bummed because I had to rush all the artwork. There was a lot more I wanted to do and if I had known it wouldn't be out for tour I would have done it.

MRR: With the third EP were you trying to tie up loose ends from the second demo, like the songs that weren't re-recorded for the Youth Attack! EP?
Zack: Well, it was like, "These are some songs we have, but we can have this out for tour," and we had talked about doing that cover for a while [Sonic Youth's "Death Valley '69"].
Tommy: We wanted to do something special with it. We didn't want it to be a huge EP or anything. The focal point, in my mind, is the cover, the B-side.

MRR: It seems like from hearing some of the new material at shows that there's some pretty different stuff coming into it, like, I remember hearing one part in particular that's a lot more melodic sounding.
Dave: Yeah, that one sticks out, but basically we're trying to pull from as many influences as we can, unless it stands out too harshly.
Tommy: Yeah, tastefully. We just do a lot of different stuff.
Zack: It's just like, why does hardcore have to be one way? And then, what is hardcore? The songs are still aggressive, but you need something to really bring that out. If every song was just "1, 2, 3, 4, go!" it would sound like the previous song. I've tried to get into newer stuff, but a lot of it is trite and uninspired—people playing the music just because they can.

MRR: On the B-side of the Youth Attack! record, Dan, you have a lot of lyrics that talk about hardcore and a lack of threat. What do you all think is wrong with hardcore, or what do you think is valid or real about current hardcore?
Tommy: [*laughs*] Um, I don't know if we're nerds, but I personally feel out of place in hardcore...because I never really get into it, I like the music...
Dan: I wasn't really talking about hardcore in general, I think it can be a beautiful thing, but it was just me lashing out against the bottom feeders, you know, like being around all these people that just want to have a good time or party or get laid or whatever. People that don't possess that kind of animosity in their hearts to go and just do something—they're civilized in the worst way. Maybe I'm just too gung-ho about this shit, and I know it's because I just can't relate to people. It's my problem, but I always thought that hardcore was all about people with that exact problem, and not just about making friends, and drinking and smoking in the parking lot, and gossiping about who fucked who. I can't dig it. So many people have no insight on things at all. They'll even have the nerve to act enthused sometimes and even sing along to the songs and all that, but something is off, something seems so insincere. For instance, I went to that Kill Your Idols showcase thing that was sponsored by Converse shoes in Miami during Art Basel with all the old punk flyers on the walls and shit, and they've got SSD

and Youth of Today blasting over the speakers as the soundtrack for like 100 people standing, talking, and waiting in a beer line. The irony of it almost made my heart explode in my chest. It was almost like a celebration of failure. I felt like I was the only one that could see it, too. Caustic Christ and Sex/Vid played, and I was really excited to see those bands, but hardcore music mixed with all that boring social party, drinking, art show shit is just like oil and water to me. You've only got your youth for so long, and if you're into this kind of abrasive culture then you can't just stay content with partying and all that garbage, and if you do then you might as well be dust. There's no time to stand around and make friends. The party must be destroyed.
Dave: Also, the Sound Idea scene that we grew up with is just a tiny little section of hardcore that is pretty much unlike any other hardcore scene in the country. It's a totally different feel, there's no emphasis on machismo or any jock-hardcore attitudes. We go on tour and go to these other cities where people are spin-kicking each other to our music, and it's hard to identify with that as the same hardcore that we grew up with. Like, listening to bands like Die Kreuzen, and Terveet Kadet...
Tommy: Cheetah Chrome Motherfuckers when you're 14...
Dave: Listening to that instead of Converge will change how you look at hardcore.
Tommy: But it's still such a cool thing, you can't completely dismiss it. I don't want to sound jaded about it...
Zack: Well, "hardcore"—aggressive music—it's actually threatening. You see it; you're scared. But the question is, how do you define that, or put it into a genre? And when you put it into a genre, it creates a formula.
Dave: There's expectations.
Zack: ...And then it just gets boring. Hardcore has become square.
Dave: If your band can just stand still, take minute-long breaks between songs, make silly faces at each other, tell inside jokes to each other, it loses a lot.

MRR: Well, what do you think is relevant that's going on right now?
Tommy: There's a lot of eclectic stuff out there, which is great. A lot of people are getting into fucked up stuff.
Dave: Florida, right now, has a lot of truly awesome things going on...
Tommy: A lot of ominous, fucked up sounding punk.
Dave: Yeah, that you can only get from a state like Florida.
Tommy: The Freudian state, I like to call it.
Zack: When you first see a band's live thing, and they're fucking weirdoes, and then afterwards, they're not chitchatting, and like, having a great time, [*laughter*] then it seems legit. Salvation, those guys are bad news.

MRR: The "lack of threat," the social aspects...everybody palling around on MySpace.
Tommy: There's such posturing, you know? Blending in is such a

foreign concept to me. I see people at shows that eat each other's shit and it's unnatural.
Dave: We're some of the most awkward people you'll ever meet. We don't have a MySpace.
Dan: We're not here to make friends.
Dave: We probably won't go up and talk to you, even if we like you. [*laughter*]
Tommy: We're not mean or anything, though...
Dave: Yeah, don't take it the wrong way, America.
Dan: Maximum America.
Zack: I don't know. It seems like so many times that the live show's just an act. Like, "We're a hardcore band, I'm tough, I'm weird." But really you're just some weenie kid from the suburbs, who rented *American Hardcore* from your university's library and bought a Pissed Jeans record, fucking smoking Black and Milds, hanging on your girlfriend. I wish I had a girlfriend to hang on after shows, telling me I look cool and shit.
Dave: I think you look cool.
Tommy: Yeah, I think you look great. It's just like, people don't have hearts, it seems like people are just trying to get girls.
Dave: It just seems like it's so easy to be genuine, so why are so many people full of shit? It's mind-boggling.
Zack: People patronize what you believe in. Like people dropping out...one day they're so convicted about something and the next, it's gone.
Tommy: Keep in mind, we're not too incendiary people. We're not militant. We just kind of let the chips fall. Like there are a lot of scumbag promoters in Tampa, specifically... [*laughter*] But really, one thing I can respect is that we're not overly jaded and we're into what we do, and we do it because we want to, and there's nothing to hide, and we're nice people.

MRR: Dan, in general, where are your lyrics coming from? I remember one review saying the lyrics were too vague. I really don't get that at all from the second EP...
Dan: I mean they're not like totally black and white, but they're pretty straightforward. It's not like Life Trap, where I'm just saying, "Society sucks...I hate my subdivision," because I don't owe it to anyone to put things so blankly. I write it exactly how I feel it, but I guess the content is just beyond whatever is a palatable hardcore lyric. I don't mean that in a pretentious way, and I'm not trying to shit all over Life Trap, you know, that's just what it is. I do think things should be simple sometimes. I guess most of it just comes from being stuck in the wrong place for way too long and then letting myself get to me way too much. You know, I'm real stuck with myself a lot. I live in a tool shed, and my life is very simple. I have no distractions. I don't go to college, I don't have a full time job, I have no friends outside of my band mates and a selective few. I literally live in a little 6' x 9' tool shed and I have a lot of time to stew in my own bitterness, which really isn't so good, but when I need to write something down it's not hard, because I don't lose it, you know, it's like a fly buzzing around in a shoe box.

MRR: I think you guys are maybe in a position to get somewhat cynical because your name gets thrown around in a hyped way—like the band name is an eBay keyword. What do you think are the drawbacks of getting that kind of attention, or the advantages?
Dave: Yeah, that's out of our control...
Tommy: You get marginalized.
Dave: You make more enemies.
Dan: For better or for worse.
Dave: We got so much shit for that Youth Attack! record from people that never even heard it.
Zack: And in some towns we're known as "trendy hipsters."
Tommy: People say we're "a third-rate Sex/Vid." I've heard that at least five times within the last month. But that's just complete vapid message board shit. Are people's music tastes getting that two-dimensional? People are so fast to make empty criticisms. Their bullets are blank.
Dave: Us being called a "hype band" seems so ridiculous.
Tommy: We live in Florida!
Dave: We're doing what we've been doing for so long, we haven't changed a thing. When we play shows, still no one comes out. It's just to like five of our friends and no one gives a shit, and people play it up like we're huge rock stars, or hipsters or whatever.
Dan: Exactly. You know, we've been doing this since we were kids and we haven't even changed our approach at all. Just totally wrecking ourselves to nobody. We've been playing in bands since we were like thirteen, to nobody! You know, like little kids playing out of crappy equipment in back rooms and whatnot and it still feels like the same thing. And we still play to like fifteen people maximum in the smallest room possible. But we put out something that gets some attention and people want to say we think we're fucking Metallica or something. It's so bogus.
Zack: It's still very surprising to me, it's like, "People are buying our records?"
Dave: Seeing as how we had to give away our first demo, with screen-printed covers that no one would buy for a dollar.

MRR: Didn't Bob want to repress the first EP?
Tommy: He said he'd give me the plates if I wanted to repress it, but I don't really want to do that. That's, in my opinion, our weakest recording. It's a cool first effort.
Dave: That was the only time we had to go to an actual studio, and go with an actual producer who'd never heard us before—but he'd worked on the first Kiss record. He also died a few weeks after we recorded it.
Dan: He also recorded Scrotum Grinder and Combat Wounded Veteran...
Dave: Yeah, he recorded a lot of the old Burrito Records. He just couldn't quite grasp what we wanted to get across.
Dan: There's zero guitar feedback on the whole record.
Dave: Since Bob was paying for the whole thing, we didn't want to sit around and linger on his dime, so we were just like, "OK, yeah, that's fine..."
Tommy: I'm still really proud of that record.
Dave: I think each record has subsequently gotten better, and if you're not going to keep trying to make better records, then why try and make records at all?

MRR: What are your plans, besides the LP, and when is the LP going to be out?
Dave: We're touring from late May to mid July, and then after that I am relocating to Atlanta, but we're still planning on keeping active, just not quite as active as now. We'll still record and play.

MRR: So you're kind of taking a hiatus after the summer?
Zack: Well, we're all going to want a break after tour.
Tommy: And the cool thing about Cult Ritual is we all kind of scheme separately, and I think Dave will think of cool shit while

he's separated, and the three of us will scheme about, and then we'll throw everything together.

MRR: What is going on with the art for the next record?
Tommy: Chris Norris, from Steak Mountain, is doing one cover.
Zack: He is going to contribute a variant cover. Mark McCoy is also going to contribute something, and Dan and I...
Dan: I was going to do one, but I don't want there to be too many covers. I just don't want it to be too wacky or too expensive.
Tommy: Yeah, another thing that's weird about Youth Attack! is that the patrons are so loyal.
Dan: It's just such a weird, stamp-collecting attitude that a few of them have. There's a small group of like eight or nine people that are like, "I gotta buy all the records as soon as they come out!"
Zack: For instance, the first record had been out a year and hadn't sold out of a thousand copies, but the Youth Attack! Record...
Dave: It sold out in a week.
Zack: And it was just like, "What the fuck?"
Dave: It definitely shows that label association had a lot to do with people actually listening to what we'd been doing.
Tommy: I think this next record will definitely separate the believers from the non-believers.
Dan: Yeah, the people who love to hate the lyrics in the first record are going to find a lot to hate in this record, and about a quarter of the record isn't really music.
Dave: We're just putting a little more emphasis on sound collage as well as, like, saws and weird barrel percussion and a lot of layered feedback drones, basically, a lot of stuff that will probably annoy you unless you're into that kind of thing. We anxiously await the reviews.
Tommy: I can't wait. It sounds like fucking Karlheinz Stockhausen.
Dave: We have a single coming out on Life's A Rape, where the B-side is all just cut up samples and sound manipulation, no actual live playing, except some drums.
Zack: And in the future, we've talked about doing a record with more of that, not just strictly that, though.

MRR: So besides the single and LP, is there anything else upcoming?
Zack: There's been talk about a live record, but I've never heard a recording that captures our live show well.
Tommy: There's also a comp that Breathing Problem is putting out. People say it has all of the "trend bands of '08" on it. We've also been called "mysterious-guy hardcore."
Zack: We don't put pictures of ourselves in our records because who the fuck wants to look at us? I'm sick of seeing how punk someone looks.

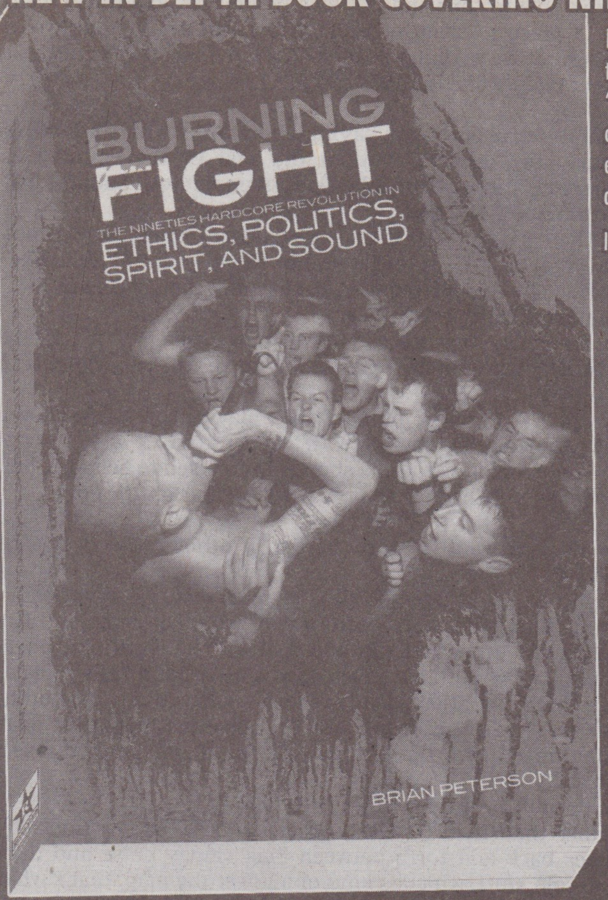
MRR: What do you think is the best thing that could happen to the band, or the most you'd want to achieve with it?
Zack: Just using the band as a vehicle to travel, and not sit in fucking Tampa.
Dave: Being able to tour and not lose money, be able to eat well, and have a place to sleep other than the van. As long as we're excited by what we're doing, I think that's the most we could ask for. If other people like it, that's cool.

MRR: I think what you were saying about Sound Idea affecting the Tampa area differently than the rest of the country is definitely true, and it seems like now, even without Sound Idea, there's still a lot going on.
Tommy: There's a lot of stuff that coincides in Tampa, sometimes it naturally gets a little segregated, but there's a lot of shit...like, there's a huge noise-rock scene in Tampa, and that affects us.
Dave: That's been around for years.
Tommy: Cephia's Treat Records is a huge influence, it's really DIY, and that's a breath of fresh air in a town full of suckers and fuckers.
Zack: I mean, DIY to the point that you're playing consistent shows to twelve people under a bridge with a generator.
Tommy: There's a lot of guerilla shows. There used to be more, but it all depends on if the generator is working that day or not.

MRR: So do you want to start the list of other projects you're involved in?
Dave: I play drums in a band called Merchandise, we have a tape coming out soon, and that's with Carson from Divisions and Pat from Publix [supermarket]. [*laughter*] And that's kind of a post-punk thing. I play guitar and keyboards in a band called Dads, which is a three-piece that's kind of like an outlet for my old buddy Cameron and I to get a little loose. We were just going for Beat Happening mixed with the Birthday Party, affectionately dubbed "twee dirge."
Tommy: I call it the straightedge Birthday Party.
Dave: Other than that, I have another band called Sex God Sex, which goes back and forth between long sludgy noise and dub. Then I do solo stuff, which is kind of all over the map, that's what I use all my other time for.
Tommy: I play guitar in Slave Scene, and that's kind of No-Trend-y, maybe sort of like early Vermiform stuff, not like Born Against, but like Towel. Maybe Landed. Also, me and Zack just started a band called Coffin Nails; it's pretty violent.
Dan: I play bass in a straightedge hardcore band called Nazi Dust, and I'm working on a solo project called Blondi.
Tommy: It's named after Hitler's dog.
Dan: No, not really, I just think Blondi is a good band name, so I'm taking it.
Zack: I do Body Rot, with Samantha from Slave Scene and a drum machine. Songs kind of vary, but we wrote a lot after listening to a lot of Sick Lipstick.
Dan: There's too much name-dropping in this interview...a lot of bands...all we've done is talk about all these old bands. Like, all you guys have done is talk about how we rip off the Jesus Lizard and the Birthday Party. You guys are such poseurs.
Zack: Um...fuck, I...god damn it, Dan. I also sit around in my room with a four track, and record spurts of noise goo. Thomas and I do Cop, which is very visual.
Dave: Also, we forgot to mention Skinhead Violence, which is our side project with me, Tommy, Zack and our boy, Ronnie-man.
Tommy: Yeah, Ronnie Cox. He also records all our stuff at Lady Godiva's Operation.
Dave: For the price of nothing. He's a great asset.

MRR: Is there anything else you guys want to say to America?
Dan: We should have done an *MRR* interview earlier, but someone from *MRR* emailed me asking us for one, and I was like, "How are we going to do this?" And he was like, "Well, just get one of your friends to do it." And I was like, "We don't have any friends, so can you come up with something?" He just never emailed me back, but I don't know what I expected.
Dave: Come see us on tour.
Zack: No, don't. Just drop off a donation. Go home. Reflect.

NEW IN-DEPTH BOOK COVERING NINETIES HARDCORE



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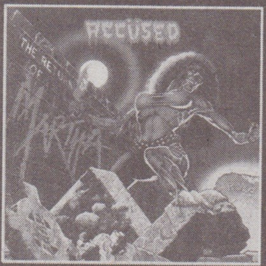

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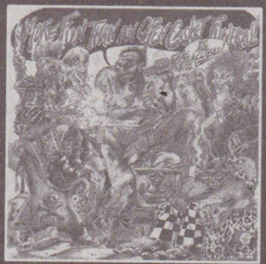

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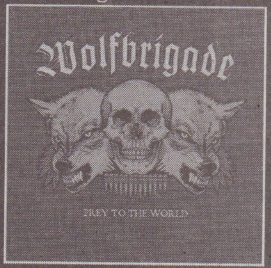

Prey to the World LP

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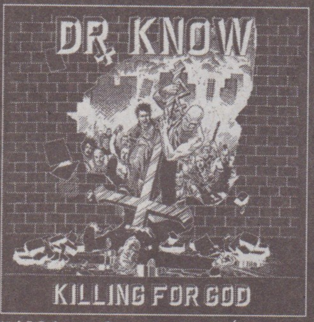

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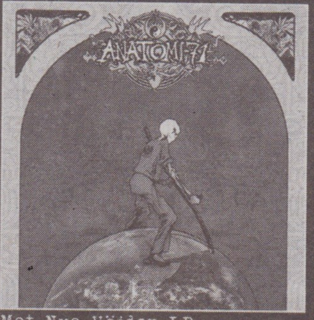

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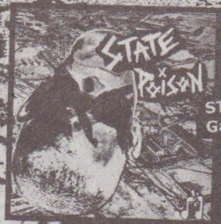

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TO KILL A KLOWN

the story of

Tom's Midnight Garden

by Lance Hahn

One of the earliest incarnations of Flowers in the Dustbin included guitarist Dev. Unable to compete with the other compelling personalities of the group, he soon left to go his own way with the group Tom's Midnight Garden.

Dev: "I had known Bill since 1980 from the local (Orpington) punk scene and he played bass in my band Persons Unknown. In 1981 I met Kappa through the Anabollic Steroids who he played drums for. My band were supporting them at The Old Queens Head in Stockwell. At that time the Steroids were a bit of a legend in Bromley and the surrounding areas.

"When Persons Unknown split later that year, I joined Flowers in the Dustbin—first as the (bad) drummer and then as the guitarist. I was sacked from Flowers in November 1983 after a rather brilliant but chaotic gig at the Burn it Down Ballroom in Finchley. In retrospect I believe there where three strong individuals in the band at that time and...well, too many chefs.

"Anyway, I immediately recruited Bill and Kappa and formed Tom's Midnight Garden (TMG) at that time in order to continue my version of what Flowers should've been/were all about."

Even more of an outsider than most of the alienated kids who were excited about punk, Dev already had other than mainstream interests including that of the occult, an interest he shared with some members of the Kill Your Pet Puppy Collective.

Dev: "It's true to say that from a very early age I was into things that were a bit "different" (occult, art, ancient cultures, etc.) and, cliché or not, I was introduced to the Sex Pistols in the playground at primary school. A friend of mine had an older brother who had just bought *Never Mind the Bollocks*—I remember that "Bodies" and "Pretty Vacant" made the most impression on me, even at the age of ten. I recognized something forbidden and rebellious about the music. I blackmailed my mum into getting me some Doc Martens and never looked back! (It's amazing how you remember these things once you're on a train of thought isn't it?) I gradually got into more bands and it went from there. Personally, I think I got more from the second generation of punk bands (1979) when the music had evolved more (Siouxsie, Ruts, Joy Division, etc.). I felt "special" being part of punk at that time, because, contrary to what you may read there were very few punks about in Greater London.

"I became aware of the anarcho scene through Gerard's visits to the Anarchy Centre and through Crass, although at the time the word "anarcho" didn't exist. I think Conflict were probably responsible for that. Anyway, the interesting thing about punk at that time (1980-1984) was that everyone was growing up a bit and blossoming as individuals. This gave birth to a very diverse range of bands and opinions. In order for the media to manipulate what was going on they labeled the different styles of music; anarcho, goth, positive(!), oi, hardcore, etc. I think they were very creative times.

"Some bands I thought were important (Zounds, The Mob, Crass), but most seemed pointless then, let alone now. I must say though—I think Chumbawumba have come on in leaps and bounds (heh, heh). Seriously though, if anyone is still out there after all these years fighting their fight (whatever it may be) then they have my respect because they are true to themselves and pure of heart."

The band name came from a children's book reminiscent somewhat of Dada play with Situationist playfulness.

Dev: "I took the name from the children's book by A. Phillipa Pearce *Tom's Midnight Garden*. I read it when I was nine years old and it simply made an everlasting impression on me. If I read it again today I guarantee it would still stir my soul and make me cry inside. I highly recommend it.

"I hasten to add that the television series and recent film of the same name are both complete crap and are definitely not worth checking out."

Even the story itself was another example of all power to the imagination.

Dev: "To Tom, the Midnight Garden he played in was everything he wanted but couldn't have. By creating an extra (13th) hour that never ended, he could realize his desires. However, his destiny is already written."

Like many groups of the scene that spawned the Mob and Flowers, the group lived in a world that was equal parts squatter anarchos, black clad Goths, and experimental music.

Dev: "My musical tastes at that time, as now, were varied.

"I listened to some of the bands in the "scene" like The Mob, Blood & Roses,

Southern Death Cult, Flux of Pink Indians, but was not really inspired by them.

"At that time (1983-5) the music on my decks was mostly from the following artists: Psychic TV, Joy Division, Marc & the Mambas, New Order, Adam & the Ants demo tapes (1978-1980), Scott Walker, The Doors, Coil, Velvet Underground, Getting the Fear (bootlegs), Sonic Youth, Lydia Lunch, Death In June, Current 93, Whitehouse.

"So, I guess, at least musically, I was not affected by the current punk scene. I was more a post punk, industrialist sort of geezer."

The group debuted with their first of many London gigs in 1983.

Dev: "Our first gig was at the Ambulance Station in the Old Kent Road, London, and we did a cover of Iggy's "No Fun." Our policy was to do a different cover version at each gig and as far as I remember we were true to this. The only cover that was a regular feature in our early gigs was of Soft Cell's "Tainted Love." Marc Almond heard about this and turned up to a gig we played at the Metropolitan club in Islington to check it out!

"We quickly got a loyal following who came to all the gigs. In my opinion the early gigs were the best, they were like a big party."

The next year Dev moved into a squat in North London and for the first and only time became truly entrenched in the anarcho scene.

Dev: "In the summer of 1984 I moved from South London to squat up in North London (N16 to be exact). Here I met up with people very much involved in a way of life that you might call the anarcho scene. Together with others you could say that we were responsible for gluing N16 together and creating a "community of folk."

"Needless to say, it didn't last too long as we were all growing up and finding different directions. For a short while I did feel part of it, but I don't think Bill and Kappa did at all."

With a growing following, the group played regularly over the two or so years of their existence.

Dev: "In the short space of time we were together we played a lot of gigs. Mostly in London but also around the UK."

Proud of their live shows, they still had ups and downs like any group.

Dev: "I suppose the only way of answering this is by putting down what comes in my mind first.

"Gerard won't appreciate this, but there were a couple of gigs (Ipswich and London) when we were supporting Flowers in the Dustbin and blew them off-stage, which we were happy about... hmm.

"Then there was a gig at the Coven in Oxford (also supporting Flowers), where we were experimenting with a girl singer, Josie... good looking, but unfortunately a mistake! Capping the evening off Chas (Flowers bassist) threw his guitar on the stage floor—a good old night!

"The last gig we played at the Metropolitan in London was an absolutely brilliant night (someone's got a video of it somewhere!).

"The worst gig I remember was at some club in Harrow and the sound was aaawwful. At the end Kappa hit the sound engineer, which was fair enough, my old man could have done better and he's all but deaf."

While playing guitar based music makes for easy comparisons to other bands in the anarcho scene, Tom's Midnight Garden played melodic, almost ethereal music that at times had more to do with some of the early stuff on 4AD as did with anything to do with punk. Lyrically, the group was also unusual, mixing politics with crypto-spirituality or Crowley-esque philosophy.

Dev: "What they were about to me, the writer, may well differ than what they were about to someone else. In any case, to go into what they were about would need a discussion—not Q&A format.

"Suffice to say that the common themes in TMG material were: imagination (power of), will (strength/power of), magick, strength, beauty, disdain of capitalism and totalitarian groups, time travel, love, disdain of the modern world, betrayal, honour, innocence, childhood, longing, desire, and an interest in strong individual characters.

"Some song titles: "Somewhere in Time," "To Kill a Klown," "Estella," "Roads," "Axe in the Heart," "Kill," "Wild Strawberries," "The Nightmare," "Porcelain," "Spirit," "The Secret Garden," "Verdict," "Paint the World," "Solitary," "My Faithful Friend," "Perish," "Once & Forever," "The Assassin," "I'll Set You Free.""

Even more odd is the track "To Kill A Klown," inspired by the Alan Alda/ Blythe Danner film of the same name. The film is part horror and part social allegory about a hippie couple on a beach getaway who become terrorized by militant right-wing psychopath.

Dev: "All these years later, you are the only person (that I have "spoken" with) who has made that connection...and it is correct!"

With all the issues both important to Dev as well as dependent on context, it would be hard to qualify best or better.

Dev: "I only wrote/write a lyric when there is something that really needs to come out. In which case all the lyrics are important to me. The lyrics are just part of the whole and cannot be separated from the music and emotions involved in a track."

Despite a large body of work, the group only ever managed one release, a demo tape.

Dev: "We only ever released that one demo, *The Gap in the Curtain*, which was on 100 Tapes. There were a few live bootlegs knocking around at the time as well. It would have been good to have documented some of our later material in the studio but it wasn't to be."

By 1985, Dev had already lost interest in the music they were making. Having, in his mind, already peaked in their capacity, he decided it was time to make a change.

Dev: "I remember it was a late summer's evening in 1984; I sat in the garden of my beautiful North London squat and knew that was it. I was supposed to be doing the sound check at a gig over the other side of London. I felt bad about letting Bill and Kappa down but could not go through the motions. As I have already explained, my direction had changed.

"That was the end of Tom's Midnight Garden, really. I shortened the name to TMG and got a new line-up together and worked on some new material, but it was very different to what had gone before. Just for the record: the last ever TMG gig was in Merlin's Cave, London on 11/06/85 and the line-up was Dev, Dougie, Chas, and James."

Immediately following the split, all three members found new musical outlets.

Dev: "Bill went on to play bass for a punk band in the Discharge vein and then got married, now lives in Devon. As far as I know he is not currently involved in music.

"Kappa went on to manage Flowers in the Dustbin and then fronted power-pop band Law of the West, then got married, and still lives in South London. Kappa now runs London Calling Promotions and is involved with music.

"I went on to form the neo-folk/classical project While Angels Watch, then got married, and still live in South London. Two new recordings of mine will be featured on two different compilation CDs over the summer."

While Dev still occasionally releases material as While Angels Watch he can still look back on Tom's Midnight Garden and appreciate it more than just in context.

Dev: "I am proud of what we did and enjoyed doing it. Essentially what TMG promoted was bang on and is very relevant today, perhaps even more so.

"The anarcho punk scene.... what anarcho punk scene?!"

AV HELA MITT HJÄRTA HATAR JAG POLISEN

PROJECT HOPELESS *crawled out from the darkest of forests of Småland, Ljungby, and took their political A//E rawpunk to the big city streets. Over the years the band has seen some bandmembers come and go. Today they're as strong as ever with a new drummer and still have loads of things to say about both small and big issues of the world. They've got a new 7" (Av Hela Mitt Hjärta) due to be released very soon, and are on their way for a coast to coast tour in the US. Be sure to catch them, you won't regret it!*

Photos by Mumia
Interview & layout by Andreas (www.folkzine.com)

MRR: To kick things off, who are the Hopeless bunch?

Project Hopeless: We are now a three-piece again. Linus is our latest recruit as a drummer, Tom's a steady bass player/vocalist, and Oskar is our guitarist and vocalist. Steve felt that he had to leave the band because of a health condition that never seemed to get good enough for him to finally be a steady part of the band, which we all feel really sorry about. Also the distance made us incapable of getting steady rehearsals and such. His words of this situation can be found on our website.

MRR: Project Hopeless has been around for eight years and counting. I'd like to know how it all started out.

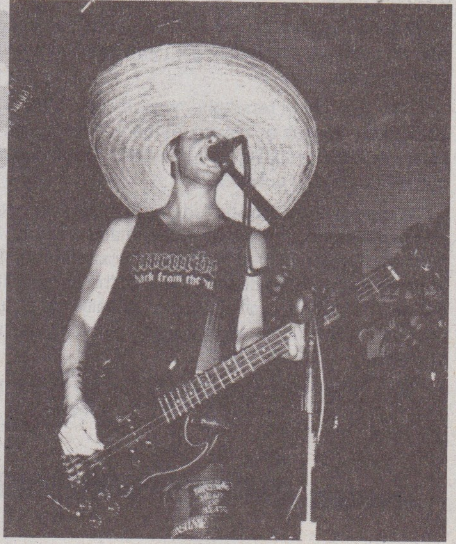
We started out in the dark Swedish forest outside of Ljungby/Småland, where we grew up. We rehearsed in our current drummer's parents' barn. That was awesome. Here we also recorded the first two 7"s, which were done by Pää, our drummer at that time, and it was raw punk as fuck. This was also the space where we took our first steps as a band; we never had any idea of keeping together for this long. Steve joined the band in the summer of 2004 when we were doing our tour of England. We wanted him to be a part of our first LP, and after that we asked him to do spoken word and some vocal duties as a steady member. We kept things going for a while and tried to keep the band as active as we could.

Unfortunately, we had to make the first big change in the band when Pää, our first drummer left the band three years ago. We recruited our great friend Stefan as our new drummer and things felt really good. We recorded the second LP, where Steve was more of a part of the band, and it turned out a lot better than we expected. For the first time we felt really satisfied, compared to what we had done before. Stefan decided to leave the band in the summer of 2008, because of other priorities in life, he felt that the time and inspiration wasn't there any longer. We were, at this time, already speaking to Linus about taking part as a stand in drummer for the fall of 2008. He offered to help out and the situation couldn't have been solved better, since he had already been the only choice in my mind for being a part of the band.

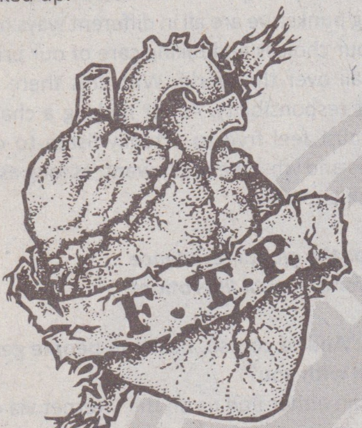
MRR: I'm guessing you've been through a lot of things together over the years. In short, could you sum up the Project Hopeless experience and tell me a little about what the band means to you?

As a band we've been doing some tours around here in Europe, so we have some stories, but I can't really come up with something good enough to print here. There's been the usual touring situations, where most of things doesn't really go the way you hope for them to do, but over all it's been good times.

One thing that I remember now is when we played Sao Paulo '07, it was a benefit show for homeless kids outside one of the bigger favelas, when one of the guys in the audience got stabbed. The reason for this was that one guy moshed into another and a fight broke out, and the guy that got moshed into pulled up his knife and stabbed the other guy. That was such a weird and awful situation, and we didn't really know what to do. The people that we knew at the place just told us to pack all of our gear and get it out to the car. So we did and the result was tat the gig ended, which I totally get. They were waiting to see what would happen. After an hour or so they let the gig proceed, which made the feeling even stranger. When the tension was a bit more relaxed, the bands got their sets done and we played as well, a really strange feeling I must say. All the time knowing, that the people putting it all on were totally scared that the cops would turn up and blow it all off. Doing the show under these circumstances, and knowing that people were expecting the guy with the knife to come back again, and preparing for that in a not too comfortable way, was really rough. But our set was appreciated and the people at the show seemed to have a great time in the end.



For being a benefit gig and people turning out like this was really scary. I mean the entrance fee was to bring a toy instead of money for the kids. Instead some guy brings his knife and uses it towards another person. That's fucked up.



MRR: I know that you've just swapped drummers. How has this affected things?
It has meant that we will be able to do a lot more things than we could before. We will most likely be able to play out a lot more, and the combination now feels really great. Linus contributes a lot of great ideas, and we're working on some new stuff in a totally different way than before. When Stefan got recruited he had a lot of other bands active at the same time, which we knew about. But since I felt that I wasn't really in a position of making too many things happen, with all my responsibilities at home and such, it was OK. But in the end we couldn't really do very much at all. That's the big difference I guess. Now we're super excited about the new stuff that we're able to get done.

MRR: With five words, what would you describe your music as?
A//E, political, pro-choice, anti-authoritarian, angry, hardcore punk.

MRR: On *Välkommen till vår Sopfyllda Fabrik*, you took Steve aboard and introduced spoken word. What made you take this step and how has it been received?
We were thinking about this for quite some time, we thought it would be a cool addition to the raw hardcore punk that we're delivering, adding the anarcho English part to it and spicing it up a bit. I think it turned out amazing, for the first time I can say that I'm really satisfied with a recording. And the response we got from this has been really good. It feels really hard to try and make something new after this, but we will give it all we've got for a new and improved hardcore attack.

MRR: Who writes the music and the lyrics in the band? Does everyone in the band contribute with their instrumental expertise or how do you do it?
As for now, it's me and Linus who are the ones making the new music together. This is since Tom isn't living in the same city as us, and it's hard to get it all going from just the practices. But Tom is contributing lyric wise as well as I am. Steve wrote some as well, which made us all contribute with our own personal parts to the band.

MRR: Your tracks are both sung in English and Swedish mixing it back and forth. How come? And has it been a deliberate or subconscious choice?
We've been writing songs in both languages, which hasn't really been a deliberate decision. It's more been because of the topic and situation that's made the choice I guess. And also depending on who wrote the lyrics, mainly thinking of Steve's parts. Sometimes it's been easier to get the words out in Swedish and sometimes it's been easier to get it out in English. I think it's nice to mix the way of writing, and we always accompany English translations to the Swedish songs.

MRR: Not just lyric-wise, is Project Hopeless a politically active band?
Guess this question is getting the answer yes, but as for what kind of activities we are doing we'd rather leave out. Some things should not be spoken of.

MRR: During a gig in Aahlborg, Denmark, you ran into a quarrel with the local police force and your bassist Tom got arrested and jailed. What happened?
During the Aahlborg gig there was a bunch of local racist hillbillies who showed up provoking for a fight. The cops showed out of nowhere, and the result was a big fight between most of the people attending the festival and the cops. Riot, I guess, would be an appropriate word. At the end of it all, the people out on the street got blocked in by the police, since this house, 1000Fryd is in the middle of a street there weren't that many alternatives left than to try and get back into the house.

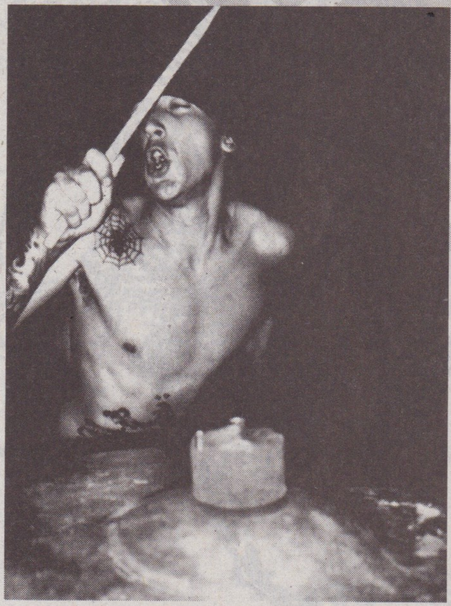
When the police had gotten as many as they could out of the confrontation, they tried to get into the house and arrest all the other attending people at the festival. Most of us managed to get inside of the gates of the house, but some others were held outside of the entrance with nowhere to go but facing the Danish cops and their truncheons. Tom was one of the people that got caught outside, hence he was beaten and unfortunately he struck back, as well, which led to his arrest. And since the Danish arseholes didn't really know what to do with him, except for being really into fucking things up for him, he had to stay under arrest for two months. Or should I say, they held him for more or less one month, after that he had to serve some jail time at the place that he was told he would be serving in Sweden, but something happened and they kept him in Aahlborg for all of the time. This was also supposed to be in a jail, not in an arrest cell for all of the time. Anyhow, this was all over after the served time and now Tom isn't that welcome in Denmark any longer. But disregarding that, Peter from 1000Fryd, asked us to tour Denmark just to demonstrate the punk resistance, which we most likely will do in the not too distance future.

We would like to thank all of the people writing letters, sending books, support and what ever for Tom whilst serving that time in the corrupt and fucked up Danish web of law.

MRR: I even hear that you're planning a tour this spring in USA. Where are you going and what are your expectations for that one?
We are really eager to be going for a three-week tour of the USA, but at the same time it feels really strange and scary. We've tried to do this at least one time before but there were too many things getting in our way for making it happen. Now we got Karlos (Shaman Records) setting us up with the possibility to get this tour rolling for real. After the CD-release of our *Välkommen till vår Sopfyllda Fabrik*, he really wanted us to come over, and now we're on our way. Can't really say what my expectations are, but the fact is that we most likely are going to travel a hell of a lot.

MRR: Would you say touring as a band is an important thing to do?
Depends on what kind of way you're doing your band. I think it's amazing to be able tour, since it's a way of meeting so many new people and doing what I and, I guess I speak for us all, like the most. As for having other obligations in life there's not really time and a will for me to be out touring constantly, but I think it's great to be able to do it now and then and also when it's possible for all the individuals in the band.

MRR: On top of yet another tour I know that you're planning a police-themed 7". What can we expect from it?
It's going to be a raw and really furious new recorded four-song 7" called *Av Hela Mitt Hjärta*, and the police-themed part will only be one song, but I think it's going to be great. The idea actually came from a hip-hop band called Emilush from the south of Sweden. They did this song where they were singing "Hela Landskrona hatar polisen" translated "All of Landskrona hate the police". (Landskrona is a not too big city north of Malmö) And they got sued and thrown into court because of this song. We're going to make a version of this part of the song and this is going to be a really interesting twist for us. And the other songs will be unusual songs as well.



MRR: It's a common thing to have loads of side projects as well as your band. Is this the case with Project Hopeless as well? If so, what do you all do?
Guess so. Tom and I have been running the DIY label Not Enough for some years now, we have a steady number of good releases. We've started to focus on just a few bands instead of releasing all that we want to, since it's hard making record releases good when it involves too many different bands, at least for us. I'm also trying to make a fanzine that will go under the name of Not Enough. This will mostly consist of information about Not Enough, its releases and such. We don't want it to be just a record label, so we're trying to point that out. Other than that, we've been printing some t-shirts and patches for bands, and we're trying to get the new badge machine working as well. Been putting on some shows now and then, time has unfortunately made me a bit limited in what I feel that I can do.

MRR: Where is Project Hopeless today and what are the future plans?
We have some plans of recording new material during the year, we will appear on a Svart Parad tribute, released during the year of 2009. The plan has also been to record some songs for a four-way split LP *Anarkist Attack* with our friends Hårda Tider, Raakakopio, and Skitkids. Hopefully we'll get around to it sometime this year, but it's depending on all of the other bands. After that we're planning to record a new LP. There are some plans of going back to Brazil again in the beginning of 2010, but more of this and that later. It will all be posted on our website, in time.

MRR: Any last words of wisdom?
We would like to thank you all for reading this far and we hope that you feel somewhat of interested in giving us a go. We would also like to say that we encourage all kinds of protests and resistance in any kind of way. Just use your imagination and you will reach satisfaction.

As stated before, we are three individuals that share somewhat of the same type of values, but we feel that we're not representatives of anything more than ourselves. As for being punks, we are all in different ways making our choices and taking care of our priorities all over the world. With this there is a great responsibility. As for making a change we must feel free to actually listen to ourselves and what we really want, as long as we are able to do so.

Up for the global resistance and for an equal liberation!

MRR: And of course, how can people get in touch with you?
You can either find us on the internet via our website www.projecthopeless.tk or our myspace.com/projecthopeless. If you wish to write us letters and such, feel free to do so:

PROJECT HOPELESS
c/o Not Enough, Poststugan 144,
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May 31st (Sun)	Kansas City KS (or Des Moines, IA)
June 1st (Mon)	Tulsa OK (or Oklahoma City OK)
June 2nd (Tue)	El Paso TX
June 3rd (Wed)	Phoenix AZ (or Flagstaff, AZ)
June 4th (Thur)	Los Angeles CA
June 5th (Fri)	San Francisco CA
June 6th (Sat)	Oakland CA
June 7th (Sun)	DAY OFF (hang out w/ friends)

DEFECT

DEFECT

Interview
and Photos
By Mark Murrmann

MRR: So, how many other bands are all of you in? I know Colin is in like 30 bands.
Colin: Not right now, though.
Mike: And it's been really great for this band, speaking personally.
Adam: Exactly. There's practice…
Colin: …writing songs. Stuff that we desperately needed as a band.

MRR: Have you guys recorded recently?
Mike: Yeah, we recorded eleven songs, some of which are slated for a 12" release, sometime soon.

MRR: How long have you been going, as a band?
Katie: A little over three years.

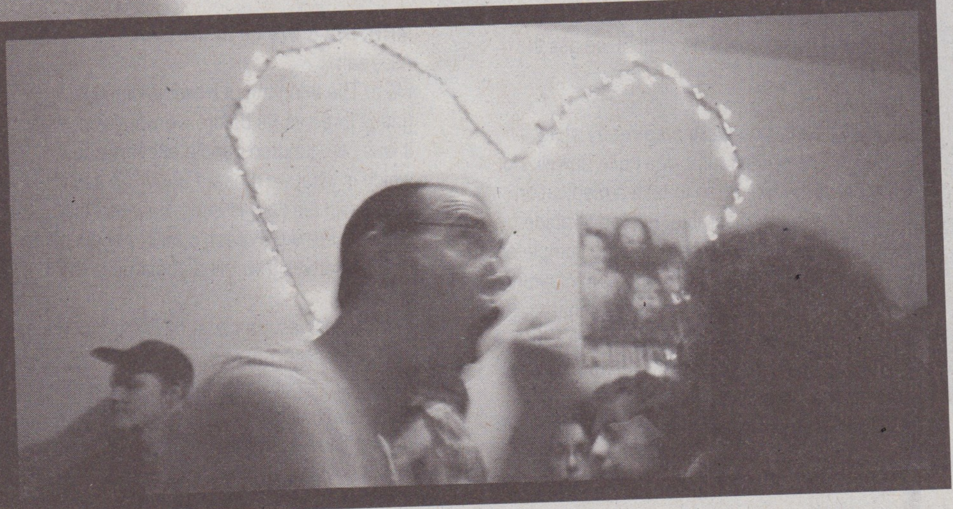
MRR: Your Alaskan tour was your first tour, right? How long was that after you started?
Colin: We had six months as a band, and about a week with Adam, under our belts. We were pretty new.

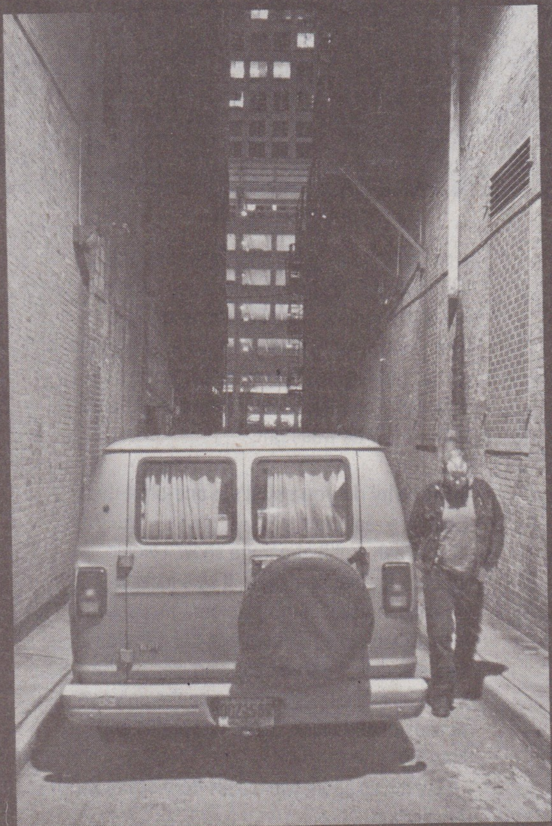
MRR: How was putting together that tour? It's not a typical destination, and seems like it'd be even harder as a relatively unknown band. How did that come together?
Colin: I don't think it really mattered. People in Alaska aren't really that hip, so if Tragedy goes to Alaska, it's the same as if a band they've never heard of goes.

MRR: How did you get the contacts for the shows up there?
Colin: That was mostly Fourth Rotor from Chicago. They had been tipped off by This Bike Is a Pipe Bomb, who had gone up. They heard touring Alaska was possible and fun and awesome. Fourth Rotor worked out the Alaska dates, and Whitehorse.

MRR: And how were those shows?
Colin: It was good, really good. We didn't know what to expect.
Mike: Three of the four shows were with the band Stunt Cock, who was really sweet people.
Colin: One of the shows was a spur of the moment, last minute thing. Our Fairbanks show had fallen through. Some kids we had met in Alaska set up a last minute garage show for us, that was without question the best imaginable show. For me, it was good enough to make going back to Alaska ideal. We were in Chicago two years ago hanging out with everyone from Fourth Rotor, and when I saw them I said, "Hey Jake, you gonna go back to Alaska?" He said, "Come on man, that was a one-shot deal." The second he said that, I knew he was right.

MRR: Why do you say it's a one-shot deal?
Colin: It's really far.
Mike: Yeah, but that garage show, I would go back for that one show. It was fucking freezing, outside in this little garage, packed with sixty people. It was a one-car garage, free standing, between punk houses on the same block that happened to be the only two houses on the block. It was just punks and industry.
Colin: It was about two blocks from downtown Anchorage.
Mike: They were barbequing locally-caught salmon outside of the show, passing around beer…
Colin: I don't think we played until 9 or 10, and bands started around 4:30pm. I think the best thing about the show was the Flying Hearts.
Mike: Oh my god.
Colin: For my part, I was sitting in a room, staring out the window, and this five-year old kid with a Misfits buttflap and a Mohawk comes up to me and says, "So, do you like punk?" To which I respond, "Yeah." He says, "Do you like the Misfits? They're my favorite band." So I go, "Yeah, they're my favorite band." He says, "Jerry Only signed my buttflap." Later we find out, his band is playing. His name was Jack. The Flying Hearts… It was a bunch of dudes from Anchorage playing songs they wrote haphazardly and him singing words I couldn't tell if he made up. The first song ended with him yelling an-archy! Then they requested





the song "Spaceship," [*sings in a Jack-esque style*] space ship, space ship, space ship. It was amazing, it really blew our minds.
Mike: One of the most memorable things about that kid was, he wasn't like so many infants and toddlers that you sometimes run into at punk shows, a product of his parent's influence. He was five, had his own opinions of things, really loved the Misfits... The Mohawk was his own, 'cause he was past that age of being coddled by his parent's interests.

MRR: After Alaska, you did a US tour.
Mike: Yeah. There was some douchebag roadie-ing for us, [*laughter*] wiring us on No-Doz.
Colin: That US tour was pretty awesome.
Adam: It was our first time in Brooklyn, which at that point, became our jam. Blew all of our minds.
Mike: Vancouver and San Pedro have matched it. That tour was surprising, because, as I alluded to with Alaska, we bit off a lot more than we could chew early on as a band. We rushed everything we endeavored until recently, when we actually put some time into things. That tour was amazing, and it was fresh out of the gate, first tour.
Colin: That tour, we actually had a record.
Mike: We had recorded our not-especially-enjoyable-to-listen-to first 7".
Adam: In a way, it's kind of like, fuck it, in a way that's cool. There's stupid covers and everything.
Mike: The covers are great. I stand by the covers.
Katie: Yeah, fuck you, Adam. [*laughter*]
Adam: You're right, I take that back. I love those covers.
Mike: I thought it was cool, that it was so long, we got to play so many weird little places. There were a lot of small towns where the shows were really cool. It was good to do a lengthy tour, our first US tour, to get through a lot of places.
Colin: There were some downsides to that.

MRR: Like what?
Mike: I was a complete pain in the ass the entire tour.

MRR: Well, you were also really sick.
Mike: The entire tour. I was quite unwell. For most of the tour I had to take a medication that made me miserable. Forced to abide by a diet that sucked. It defeated me completely, because I didn't get to do one of my favorite things on tour, which is to eat regional specialties and stuff. I was a total dick the whole time to anyone and everyone around me, which was a lot of people.
Colin: It was a six-week tour, so we were all kind of irritable.

MRR: That happens on a six-week tour, for sure.
Mike: Yeah, everybody hated everybody, it was awesome. [*laughs*]

MRR: How long did you take off after that tour before you headed off again?
Colin: That was like...towards the end of '06. Our next one was April-May '07. That was Canada, which was awesome. Because me and Mike got to do what we'd been talking about forever, which was go all the way out to Newfoundland, and actually see all of Canada. It was the best thing we could have done. It was so fun.
Adam: We had a good time in Toronto. Winnipeg was insane. We sold forty records in Winnipeg.
Colin: That does not happen to us.

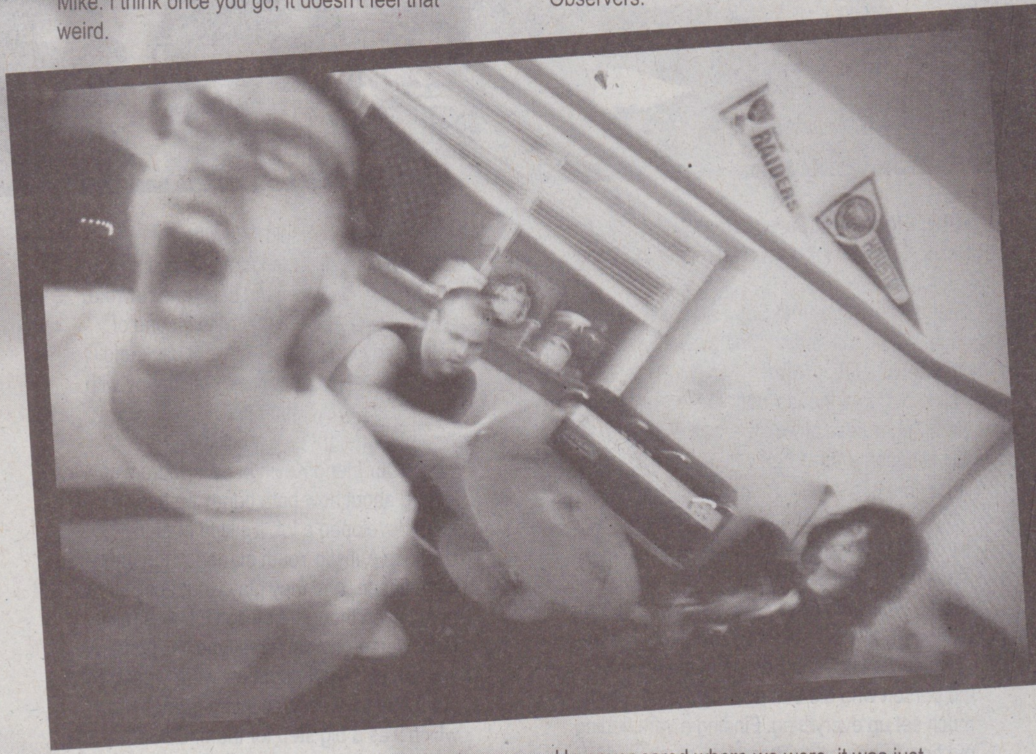
MRR: Do you think it's one of those things where, so few bands go to those places, especially from the states?
Colin: I think a lot more bands go to Winnipeg than go to say, Newfoundland.
Adam: There's a pretty killer punk scene there, right now.
Colin: Those guys from Under Pressure do a lot.
Mike: Those guys are awesome.
Colin: They do a lot in terms of organizing spaces and running distros and shit.
Mike: As Colin mentioned, he and I had been kind of talking and thinking about doing a tour to Newfoundland ever since the last band of ours [Observers] toured Eastern Canada all the way to Montreal, then dipped back into the States. Kids along the way were saying, "Oh, you're doing a tour across Canada, are you going to Newfoundland?" No, we hadn't realized that was a possibility.
Colin: "What's a Newfoundland?" [*laughter*]
Mike: They said, shows there will be amazing, better than this Toronto show with Fucked Up, Career Suicide, the Bayonettes, and the Brutal Knights. How the fuck could a show be better in Newfoundland? We finally got to go there and see what it's about.

MRR: Did it live up to the hype?
All: Yeah.
Mike: The thing about Newfoundland is, I guess three years before we went, was when it was two hundred people at every show, which is what we'd heard about. To say it's died down isn't a bad thing, because the shows there were great, a lot of people came out. There was a write up about us in the paper.
Colin: That was the bar show. I thought the all ages show was out of control.
Katie: Adam got screeched in, became an honorary Newfie.
Adam: They do this thing where you have to say this poem, spin around in a circle, kiss a

cod, and take a shot of this drink, which I did.
Colin: The all ages show was super fun, it was part way out of town. At the bar show afterwards, I thought there were a bunch of fifteen year olds there, drinking at the bar. There was glass everywhere, people getting knocked over and bleeding.
Mike: Some bands had to cancel another show after that, because the guy who was in all the other bands in town couldn't play guitar.
Adam: I was standing at the bar at that show, and some guy came up and said, "Lemme buy you a beer." I didn't know who he was. Then he pulled this book out of his jacket, it was the history of Newfoundland and Labrador. He said, "Read this and you'll be a real Newfie." [*laughter*] The people there are that nice.
Mike: The people are incredible.
Colin: Though I still have naïve ambitions of going to Alaska someday, I know my band mates don't necessarily agree with me, I would totally go to Newfoundland again.
Mike: Because for some reason, that sounds reasonable. [*laughter*]
Katie: Remember that 24-hour drive?
Mike: You mean the time we drove 44 hours without playing a show?
Colin: But we got to camp and tell stories.
Katie: I got to see the Northern Lights in the Yukon while sitting in a hot spring, after we drove through a herd of wood bison. It was so great.
Mike: I feel like I was always sitting in that back seat next to that fuckin' part of the van that doesn't have a window. I never did see a bear.
Colin: The entire drive up, we saw signs, "Watch Out For Moose," "Watch Out For Wolves," "Watch Out For Bison," for each particular region. The whole drive up we did not see a single thing. We saw some wolves in southern BC, just outside of Vancouver. But nothing quite as spectacular as had been alluded to by everything we'd read and been told. We get to Anchorage, and the kids are like, "Really, you didn't see any moose?" Because, outside this little cul-de-sac here, there's always moose in the morning." We're like, "This is all a ruse, you guys are conning us, there are no moose up here. It doesn't exist." But, on the drive back, it was early May at the time, the ice was melting, but it wasn't quite sunny out yet. There were icebergs out on some of the lakes, and I distinctly remember seeing a couple of moose on an iceberg, sipping from the lake. At one point, going through the bison region of that drive, we drove into and through a whole herd of bison, numbering about thirty or forty, including some bisonlettes, little baby bison. Some of them were as big as the van, just strolling on the road. So we were going ten miles an hour with them, it was amazing.

MRR: After the giant, crazy Canadian tour, you went to Brazil? Was it as much an excuse to travel to South America?
Mike: I think that's been something that Colin and I have shared. When we played in the Observers before this band, we did a lot of touring, as much as half the year, at one point.
Colin: I wouldn't say it's using the band to travel. We did a lot of traveling, and then when that band broke up, one of the contingencies of our decision to stop playing in that band was, all this touring is so fun. We've got to keep doing that. So, between he and I at least, that was sort of an intention with starting another band. Let's keep doing this stuff, it's super-fun. It just so happened that we've gone some new and exciting places that we hadn't been before.
Mike: I think once you go, it doesn't feel that weird.

MRR: On which label?
Colin: Well, we should double-check with the labels…but I think I can say Taken By Surprise and Thrashbastard. We all definitely want to tour Europe. It doesn't really make sense for us to go there… In Alaska, nobody knows who anybody is, but in Europe, people follow reviews and records really closely. It will totally make sense for us to go there after we have a record out. Right now, it wouldn't really make sense.
Mike: It would have made sense for us to go to Europe before something like Brazil. Colin's reaction to Brazil when he went there with the Clorox Girls was the impetus for our going there. It was so strong and so overwhelming, which wasn't like any place we went with the Observers.



Colin: The thing is about these far away places, people are generally pretty grateful. Because the bigger bands who have the resources to get there, usually don't. There's not as much money to be made.
Mike: It's not really an obvious path. I think people look at touring like, we'll tour the US, then maybe we'll tour this place. It's not like, then we'll tour Alaska. [*laughter*]

MRR: Have you guys been to Europe?
Mike: Not yet.

MRR: That's kind of awesome…but it's kind of dumb. [*laughter*]
Colin: We've all been to Europe separately.
Katie: I just went for the first time this year.
Colin: This new record is going to be coming out in Europe…

He never cared where we were, it was just, "It's another show, I get to play bass again tonight" [*said with wonder and joy*]. He never really cared where we were. Then he came back from Brazil just wide-eyed and blown away. It was like, well, we'll go to Europe someday. Let's do this [Brazil] while he's feelin' it, while we can.
Colin: I spent more money than I've ever spent on anything to go to Brazil, and I would do it again.

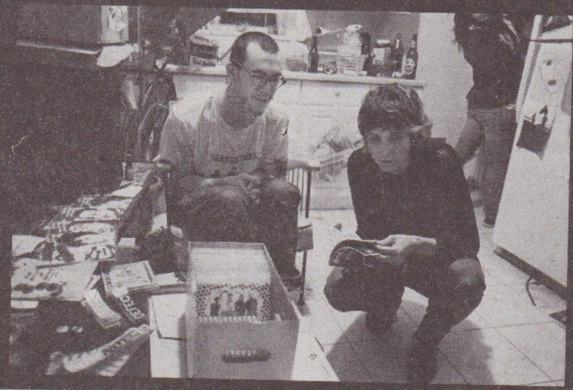
MRR: That's what I've always heard. It's amazing that more bands don't go to Brazil.
Adam: I think it just comes down to the money thing. It is the third world.
Mike: I think also, with MySpace, it's easy to look up some band in Colorado and say, "Hey can you help me with a show," which is kind

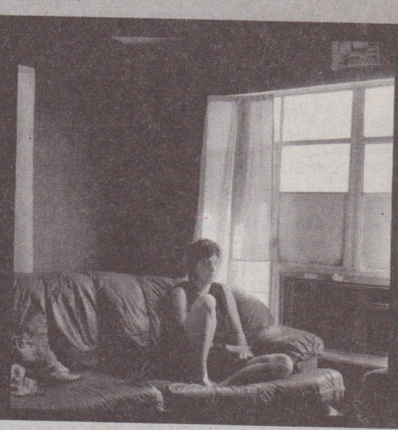
of a bad and a good thing. I think it's a little harder to do that with somebody who speaks Portuguese.
Colin: We only played eighteen shows in a month, which by our touring style is so few…
Adam: …by Brazilian standards, that's a lot, because, usually you don't play on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. You definitely don't play on Monday.

MRR: How long?
Colin: Almost a year.
Adam: But we wrote a shitload of new material and did this new record.

MRR: The new stuff sounded different, but awesome.
Mike: It is different.
Colin: This is the first time Adam and Katie have written some songs. I'd always say, "you guys should write some songs." And they'd be

MRR: Did you guys play out much in Portland during those eight months?
Mike: Yeah, a bit.
Colin: The funny thing is, when we got back from Brazil, we just got offered bad shows that I set up. In the last few months, we've been playing good shows.
Mike: We came back from Brazil with this high of the greatest tour ever, and people loving it…to a city that just did not give a shit.





MRR: Eighteen different cities?
Colin: Nope. I think it was ten shows in São Paolo.
Adam: Remember that São Paolo is fucking huge. I think that most of the shows were different in a lot of ways.
Colin: Our core friends went to the majority of them, regardless of where it was. But then, this is at some huge bar, where there's going to be tons of different people. This is some tiny punk club, playing with some type of hardcore bands. They really put in the effort to make it a tour of São Paolo.
Colin: I went with Clorox Girls a couple years before. That was booked by two people, one of which was living in Europe at the time. So the person who did that and his brother pretty much set up everything. Finding a van, finding out how to pay for it. There's so much work those guys put in, so much of their personal money, personal time. They got nothing from it besides a spot in the van, which they paid for. I think they understand that shit is really expensive there. As much as Brazilian money is worth less than American money, the amount it costs travel there is a lot. There's some people there who are reasonably well off for São Paolo, and Rio de Janeiro is five hours away. I was saying, I went to Rio once, a couple years ago. [And the people from São Paulo] said, "Yeah, I've been there once." I was like "Really? That's the same amount of times I've been…" A lot of people, they don't travel at all, just because, to fly across the country, here in the States it's a lot. There, it's impossible.
Colin: This little thing [*quick tour down the West Coast over Thanksgiving*] is our first tour since Brazil, so it's been a while.

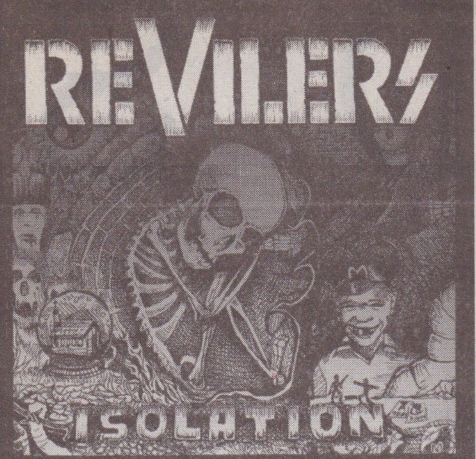
like, "Yeah, we should." [*laughter*]
Colin: We've all put a lot of energy into the existing songs. We went back and rewrote and reworked songs that at least one of us secretly didn't like. We went back and reworked them so that we're all happy with them. It's a really good feeling.
Adam: It brought us a lot closer.
Colin: Our friend Kevin in San Pedro was talking about how both bands on this tour have developed a lot. It's kind of funny, because Autistic Youth started when they were fifteen, and they play what I call street punk, even though they don't. It was really basic verse-chorus-verse type 1-2 punk. We started, and we thought we were writing good stuff. And they evolved into a great band, which was a big step for them. Obviously, they couldn't have started as a great band, but they could have. The Diskords are amazing, and they started at twelve or thirteen. There's a huge progression for Autistic Youth. For us, I'd like to think that we're becoming a good band, and it's our fault that we didn't start out that way. We kind of rushed into stuff. The beginnings of these two bands were so different, and it's the same how we're slowly turning into something.
Mike: I think the last eight months have been productive, even though we're really bad about practicing on schedule, it ended up happening no matter what. I think it really put us into the ebb and flow of writing songs together. All the practice that we should have done before we went to Alaska, before we did the six-week US tour, but didn't, and what the fuck ever, we're doing it now.

MRR: And so then what's next?
Colin: What's next is the record. Where next? Mexico in February, and Cuba, and some US dates. We tour down to and through Mexico, fly to Cuba for a week, come back. [*this already happened*]

MRR: Do you have shows in Cuba?
Colin: We have a contact.
Mike: Nothing's booked. We've got some wild emails about wanting to put us on national TV. Not because we're famous people, but "Lemme know the dates, and here's what I can do." It sounds really exciting. I really wanna go play punk shows in a Communist country where Americans aren't allowed.
Colin: We had originally been talking about three or six shows in Cuba, and they told us we can do one or two weeks.
Mike: Like you were sayin', I can't imagine it being the same way in twenty years. We were talking about where we want to go next. Europe is something we all want to do. I think a US tour might be a little more financially feasible after Mexico and Cuba.
Colin: He [*their contact in Cuba*] said we should have $21, per two people, per day.

MRR: Where's your favorite place at home?
Katie & Mike: Brooklyn.
Mike: Specifically, the third floor of the Tompkins Cultural Center.

Contact:
www.myspace.com/defectdefect



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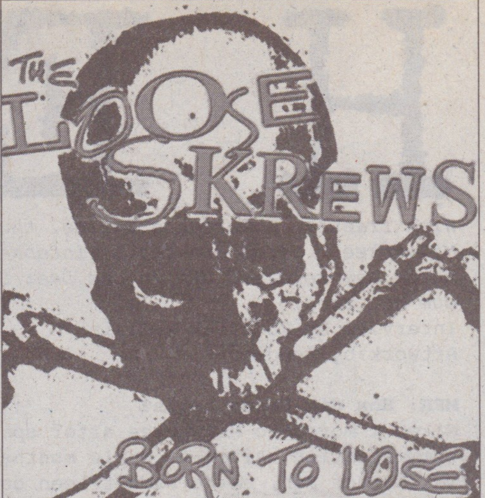

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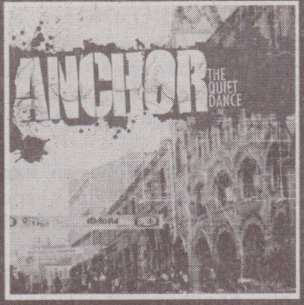

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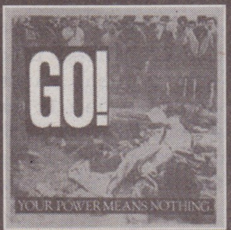

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HERDS

With frantic, powerful drumming, thunderous bass, maniac guitar, and howling, earth-obsessed vocals, Milwaukee's Herds creates an intense and memorable style of hardcore punk. Since their self-released demo, Herds has released EPs on the Deer Healer label and Fashionable Idiots. Their self-titled LP is finished and due out soon.

Interview by Roderick McClain
Artwork by Feeding

MRR: How did Herds begin?

Mike: I moved to Milwaukee after spending two non-productive years in Santa Barbara. Dave and I had some communication. After a couple months of being here, I talked to him about starting a band. Somebody suggested we contact Jon, as he hadn't been doing much with music since living in Milwaukee, so that's what we did. And Lugs [Justin] became the drummer at our first practice.

Jon: Mike emailed me and asked if I wanted to do a band with him and Dave. I said yes. I had been living in Milwaukee for three years at the time. I wanted to start a band, but I don't get out much and hadn't really met anyone to play with. I knew Dave casually, but he was always doing at least two bands at a time. I assumed he would be too busy. I was wrong.

Justin: I got a call from Dave. He asked, "Are you free tonight? The drummer we had lined up can't make it. Can you play drums fast? Want to start a band?" I met Mike and Jon for the first time at that practice. Lucky for me the other guy couldn't do it.

MRR: Does Herds feel at home in Milwaukee?

Mike: I feel perfectly at home in Milwaukee because I don't know many people. I have no idea if people care about Herds here or not. It doesn't matter. I like playing basements, I like uncomfortable situations, and I think Herds adequately provides me with both. I think Dave and Justin would have a different take on this.

Dave: I love this city. I moved up here in the fall of '96 to go to school and haven't had the slightest urge to leave. To me, Milwaukee has all the aspects of big cities that I love, like shows, vegan food, etc., but with the feel of a much smaller town. It's rare that you go out in this city and fail to run into someone you know, or at least recognize.

Justin: Herds has only played four shows in Milwaukee total, and I can't say if I even know one person that's been to all four. It's been four different crowds each time. Milwaukee's a little divided—there are micro-scenes that fit together sometimes. It's a strange place to be, but at the same time, I love that about it. Dave and I have been in Wisconsin for a long time, but I didn't even meet him until three or four years ago, even though I've been playing in bands for ten years now. I don't think we play enough to feel truly at home as a band, but there are a decent amount of people that enjoy Herds here from what I gather. It's funny. People will ask me, "Who do you play with now?", and when I say Herds, they're like "Oh yeah, with Dave, right? I've heard of you guys, but never seen you." That's a pretty common thing I encounter, even with people I've known forever. And that's totally alright by me. Herds exists on a plane that keeps itself happy, and if people here care, that's cool. If not, it doesn't matter to me.

MRR: What sort of human experience provides inspiration for Herds material?

Mike: I can really only speak from my own experiences, both in writing lyrics and the motivation for writing those lyrics. In my case, it's all about isolation, really—me and my surroundings, or desired surroundings. And I find natural disaster to be pretty beautiful.

Justin: Every interaction I have with people affects me and fuels me to create music in some way, consciously or not. Whether it's hearing someone say, "You guys are fags" at one of our shows, when in fact I am a fag, and gee, thanks for noticing, or dealing with some stupid jerk in the service industry job I keep. It all fits in there somehow, creating anger, happiness, frustration, etc.

MRR: What other bands, artists, or thinkers have been influential in the shaping of Herds?

Mike: Lyrically, I can't say there are any outright influences. I never consciously experienced another work or piece of art that I tried to emulate, at least not as a whole. There are some books that I truncated into a few lines and then used their titles as song titles—books about Native American mythology, the volcano Katmai, Isle Royale. I was discussing that movie Into the Wild with some people, and I thought it was garbage. It was suggested that I read about Dick Proenneke and watch Alone in the Wilderness, which I guess could be considered influential. I also enjoyed Being Caribou: Five Months on Foot with an Arctic Herd, by Heuer, along with the accompanying film. I would also regret not mentioning the movie Altered States, which I think about on a nearly daily basis. I blame that on being in Threatener and living in Ann Arbor for a few years.

Justin: George Rebelo, Coady Willis, and B make me want to be a better drummer, and Dave Grohl makes me want to be a better musician. Every visible queer in the punk scene has made me want to speak out for who I am.

Jon: The two bands that make me want to play music are Motörhead and Black Flag.

MRR: Mike, would you mind clarifying why Into the Wild was garbage?

Mike: I read the book a number of years back and the movie sparked some conversation. Some people like to romanticize the rich kid rejecting his privilege to "become one with nature," or something, but I can't understand glorifying complete ignorance of the elements. Nature is hard, be prepared. Dying because you're stupid isn't something to praise. That's why I find Dick Proenneke's story appealing. He "retired" to Alaska alone, living entirely off the land, for something like 30 years. He was smart. He survived.

MRR: Is the creative process a group effort, or a solitary thing, brought to the table only after some mulling?
Mike: Musically, a song is written and then it's run through the band filter. It sometimes sounds very similar to the original idea, and it sometimes takes a much different form. We seem to work together well to create something we are all pleased with. Lyrically, I usually just take care of that myself. Sometimes somebody will come up with fake lyrics during practice that I try to fit into the new songs.
Justin: I had a bunch of songs I'd written over the years. I planned to do a recording project for myself at some point. It just so happened that those songs fit with what Herds was doing, but they've changed a lot and have since become something completely different. Herds has the best song-writing dynamic of any band I've been in. Someone comes with a riff or two, and we all work to piece it together, or add parts, and then Mike finishes it off with lyrics. Dave is usually the arranger. I remember a practice where it was just Mike, Jon, and I—Jon had a song and we worked on it for an hour. Nothing really came of it. We were lost. And then Dave showed up late, listened to all the parts we had, and within ten minutes we were playing it as a full song. Everyone has their job in Herds, and it's great.

MRR: Lyrically, Herds sidesteps some of the subjects that are typically punk. It seems Mike has less to say about people and things, more to say about places and nature. Could you speak to the decision to address those subjects?
Justin: At our first practice, when we were deciding who would do what, Mike said he wanted to sing, but that he didn't have an agenda or anything to add to political hardcore. I liked that. He showed up at the next practice with lyrics to a song called "Trees." We started referring to our songs as, "Nature 1," "Nature 2," etc. I like the fact that Mike sings about something different.
Mike: Well, I don't have a political agenda that I want to discuss, let alone scream into a microphone. Most of my interests revolve around the outdoors and animals—nature as a whole. I also have a fascination with different spiritual and dimensional ideas. I'd rather think about isolation and the power of non-human elements. I'm certainly not an expert on any of these topics, so most Herds lyrics end up being about whatever book I've borrowed from the library. Realistically, though, I probably just address nature because it's just what comes to mind. It wasn't so much a decision. It was just what happens.
Jon: If Mike doesn't think he has anything political to say, and if he feels more comfortable writing his lyrics about nature topics, I'm glad. At least it's genuine.

MRR: Does Herds have a planned end in sight? If so, what ambitions do you have to that end?
Justin: I was going to move away from Milwaukee in January of 2009, so we had a functional end in sight. We were trying to get the LP recorded before I left. My plans changed and I decided to stay in town. I'm glad I'm sticking around for now. But I would've kept recording stuff and sending it to the band anyways, even if I'd moved. We don't practice that much as it is. Jon: I want to keep doing Herds until we feel that creatively there is nothing left. If Justin and Mike move away, we can still record and play the occasional show.
Dave: Mike is going to be moving this summer, so in my mind, that is when Herds will end. It doesn't look like he will be leaving the Midwest, so maybe there will be a few shows after he moves, but I'm not really interested in a long distance relationship. I have a bad habit of not letting bands die and I am trying to break it.
Mike: And that's one of those things we disagree on. I don't mind continuing the band long distance. I like what we're doing. We're trying to be as productive as possible before I end up moving so we don't regret anything.

MRR: Did experiences from previous bands shape Herds in any way?
Jon: Yes, but I am not going into details. All I am going to say is that it is a joy to be in Herds and write and play music with these guys.
Justin: Yes. I learned not have any real expectations for what a band could be. The previous four years of my life were spent between two different bands that broke up in the middle of recording LPs. Most of my band experience was shared with one or more of the same people from previous bands, so playing with a completely new group of people was something with which I had little experience. I wasn't sure how it was going to go, but it's been working out well.

MRR: Is Herds a touring band?
Justin: I'm the only person in this band who is not married, in school, a parent, or a homeowner. I've done plenty of touring and would love to do it again, but I don't think circumstances will allow that, which is fine by me. Jon's wife was pregnant when we started this band, so I think we all knew touring wasn't going to happen.
Jon: Right now touring does not fit in my life. I have a son who just turned a year old and a mortgage, so I can't be playing some poorly attended basement show a thousand miles away while my wife works and takes care

of Felix. Besides, I don't think Herds is miles enough to do well on tour. But if and opportunity to tour presented itself, I would be fine with them finding a scab guitar player and going for it. I plan on being in bands forever, so I can go back to touring when my son is grown.
Dave: I spent the majority of my early 20s on tour, and when I wasn't on tour I would play shows pretty much every weekend. Now I'm married and own a house so I can't get away with that lifestyle anymore. I still love playing shows more than almost anything, but I don't need to do it for three months straight anymore. I'm totally content being a weekend warrior. And no, I wouldn't go on tour with a scab. Herds is the four of us.

MRR: You mention your son, Jon. Is punk something you'll share with him?
Jon: Well he will be exposed to it just from being around me, but I don't plan on trying to steer him down any paths. I want him to be an individual, and pursue his own interests, not mine. I will however encourage him to learn a musical instrument. Every child should have the opportunity to refuse learning an instrument.

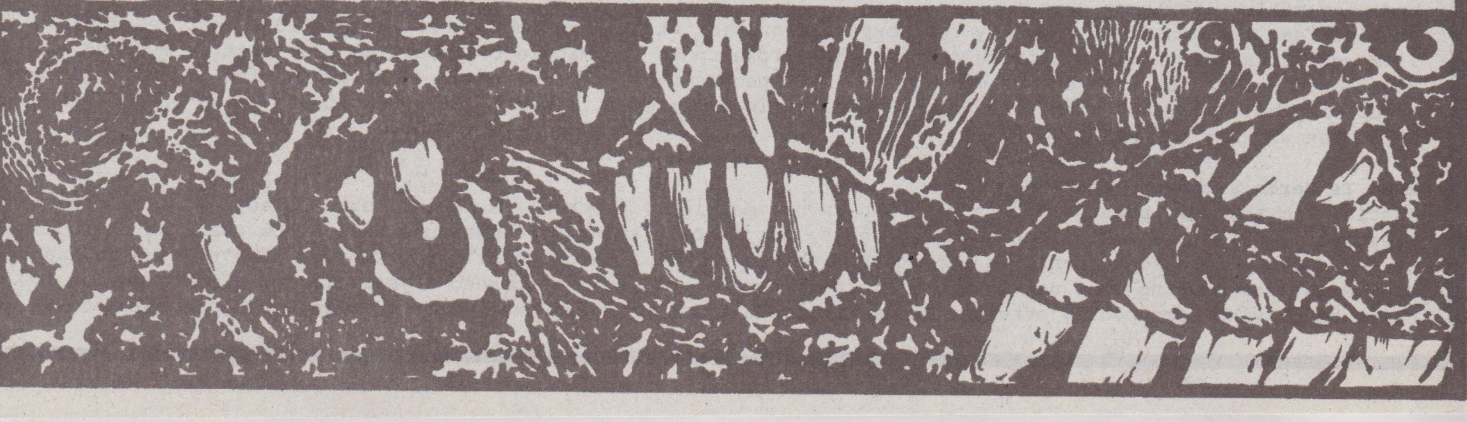
MRR: How far from Milwaukee could you travel in order to play?
Mike: Our second show was in Chicago. We played a 7" release show in Minneapolis. I think we would like to head as far as Detroit, Pittsburgh, and Cleveland sometime this summer, or at least I would. If the situation was right, I'd be interested in playing any place I've never been.
Jon: Six hours in any direction.

MRR: How did cassette demos sell versus the CDR?
Mike: We sold more cassettes, but we pushed them more than the CDR. We made 100 tapes and considerably less CDRs. The CDR was really just an option for people without tape players. Kind of like mp3 download coupons with vinyl records, or something.
Jon: Cassette is the true demo format. I feel that the CDR demo is a totally disposable format. It's like selling coasters for kids to set beers on.
Justin: I was the one who pushed for the CDR demo. I'll admit it. I have an iPod. I deliver pizza. I listen to music in my car. I need that immediate convenience. I knew that we wouldn't sell many, so I offered to take care of that part of it. I know I'd like to have that option if I saw a band, rather than have to create mp3s myself. I knew they were just going to be beer coasters, as Jon said, after they got uploaded onto a computer, but convenience was the only reason I pushed for them. I'm glad we did tapes, so we satisfy the "true" demo format, but I'm also glad we offered the CDs too. I'm also not surprised we sold more tapes.

MRR: What's the transition been like for those of you who in younger times were more focused on music than jobs, mortgages, relationships, and kids?
Dave: I think I am still more focused on music than all those other things. I have a totally understanding and supportive wife who is also a musician. Unlike her, I don't have any real career ambitions. If I didn't think my body was going to give out, I would be fine carrying furniture and playing music for the rest of my life.
Mike: Family and friends always come first to me, but I know I was less energetic and focused on life, in general, when I wasn't doing anything musically. I think being in Herds has allowed me to be more committed to my wife, finishing school, and to working on a career. It's been great to anticipate a practice or a show to get my mind off my everyday concerns.
Jon: I think for me all those things have learned how to exist together. If I wanted to tour constantly the family and the house would be cramping my style, but Herds does what I want Herds to do.

MRR: What interests do you all have outside of music?
Dave: From bands, to recording, to setting up shows, music pretty much consumes all of my free time.
Justin: Since I don't tour much at all anymore, I travel a lot to make it feel like I'm doing something other than just going to work every day.
Mike: I probably have too many interests. My obsessions change regularly. Motorcycles, in general, are always my #1 but I spend more time with music-related activities these days.
Jon: Doing things with my family. My wife Toun and I work opposite hours so that Felix won't have to be in daycare, so the weekends are the only time the three of us can do things together. Felix will be big enough this summer that we can plan activities he will enjoy, so I am looking forward to that. On the other side of that, Herds is my "me time," which every parent should have.

MRR: What sort of jobs do you hold?
Dave: I am a mover and have been doing this for six-and-a-half years.
Justin: I deliver pizza.
Mike: I'm a librarian. When the band started, I had just begun my studies.
Jon: I work for a commercial printing company.



MRR: Those of you with partners, how does a band dynamic operate within the scope of your relationships? Are your partners interested in the sort of things you do musically? Do you relate on those levels, or is there some common ground?
Mike: My wife, Abby, is interested only because it's what I'm doing. It's not something she would care about if I weren't around. With that said, I try to get her to record music with me regularly. I had her sing in a studio project I was involved with and a collaboration we did together with another band. That's mostly for my own amusement, though.
Jon: I think Toun appreciates how important music is to me, but sometimes there is some tension within our relationship where my interest in the band is concerned.

MRR: Who designs layouts and what inspires the aesthetic employed by the band?
Mike: The "Spring" b/w "Katmai" single just followed the design of the rest of the Deer Healer label singles. That wasn't really an aesthetic decision made by the band, but one that was based on my own design-challenged label aesthetic. The artwork for the self-titled 7" on Fashionable Idiots was done by Feeding, our friends from Seattle. They did the artwork and requested that it be screened by Monolith Press in Oakland. We agreed with their ideas and plan on working with them for our future releases.

MRR: What elements of Milwaukee do you like and dislike?
Dave: I love the small town feel of Milwaukee and the sense of community that it fosters. There are lots of local, independent businesses, and it's really easy to get to know people here. At the same time, Milwaukee is extremely segregated unlike any other city I've seen. We have horrible public transportation and a horrible habit of dumping untreated sewage into Lake Michigan.
Mike: I'm with Dave in that I really like Milwaukee. I moved here with no idea of what it would be like—it was just the place that worked out best when I was applying for grad school and my wife was applying for jobs. The day we moved in was my first time in the city. I'm never at a loss for things to do. Like Dave said, it is horribly segregated and it has some other serious big city troubles, but I sort of live in a college bubble separate from that.
Jon: I think people generally have a low opinion of Milwaukee, but for its size it has a lot going for it. There are plenty of good places to eat, and there are quality local alternatives for corporate chains here.
Justin: I love the fact that it's close to bigger cities, and is not only cooler than all of them, but cheaper as well. I never really have to leave my neighborhood...my job, practice space, favorite restaurants, bars, and friends all live there. We also get lots of shows here, and the ones we don't usually always go to Chicago, so it's reasonable to head down there to see a show.

MRR: How much time do you spend on Herds per week?
Dave: On average, we spend two hours a week at practice. Sometimes we go a month without any activity and at other times, we practice religiously. We have even been known to pull 8 o'clock practices on Sunday mornings, much to the dismay of the Church that operates out of the same building we practice in.
Mike: Practicing while church is in service is kind of fun. I think they opened our door and checked us out mid-song once.
Justin: Directly fucking with Christianity is the only reason I agree to practicing on Sunday mornings before 10 am. It makes me unexplainably happy.
MRR: Your LP is nearing completion. Is there anything you'd like to speak about as far as that's concerned?
Mike: Yeah, the LP is pretty much complete. By the time this is printed, it may be out. Fashionable Idiots will be releasing it. It is 14 songs and about 26 minutes long. We recorded it with Shane at Howl Street in Milwaukee, the same place we recorded the 7"s. We just spent a lot more time working on the LP, for better or worse. But I think for the better. Most definitely for the better.

MRR: To your knowledge, do previous bands generate any carryover fan base?
Mike: I mean, Jon was in Charles Bronson and Dave was in Seven Days of Samsara and is currently in Get Rad, all of whom have a significant fan base. I could not tell you how much of that has carried over to Herds, but it doesn't seem like a lot, if any. On the other hand, we've only played two shows outside of Wisconsin.
Jon: The whole ex-Charles Bronson thing only works if you are Mark McCoy, but to answer your question, no, we have not enjoyed a built-in fan base as a result of our previous band memberships. Unless we have, in which case it has not helped.

MRR: Do you have your next release planned? If so, what format, what label, etc?
Mike: Aside from the LP, which is being released by Fashionable idiots, we have some ideas. Nothing is set in stone. We'll just keep writing songs and see where that takes us, but I think we definitely have plans for some more releases.

MRR: Is there anything you'd like to add in closing?
Mike: I would just like to thank you, Rod, for doing this interview and MRR for printing it. I'd also like to thank Feeding for providing the artwork.

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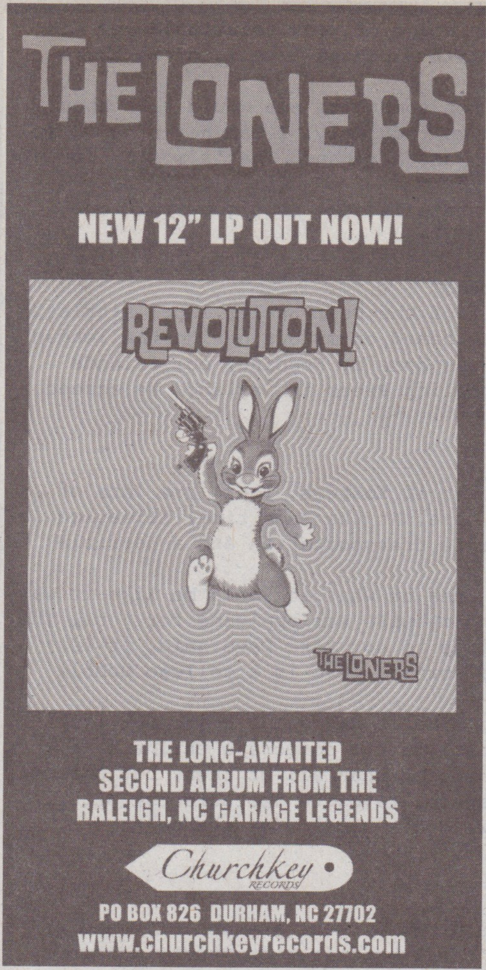
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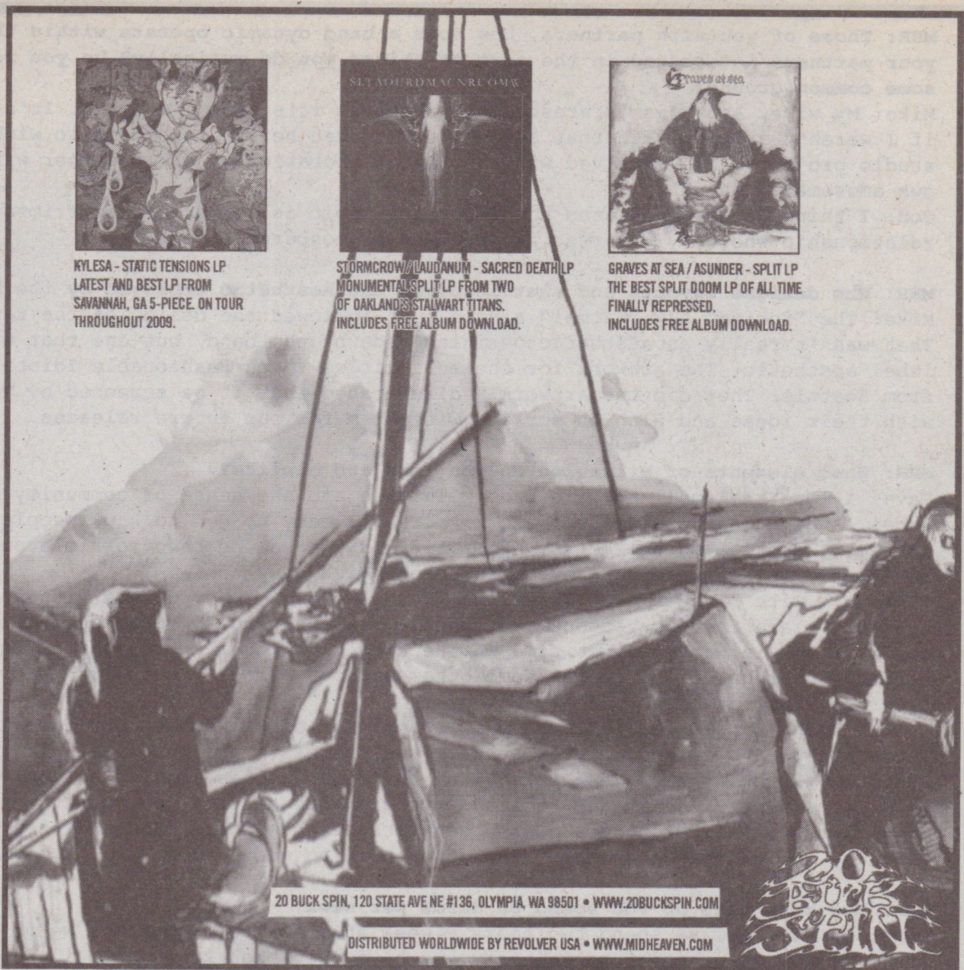
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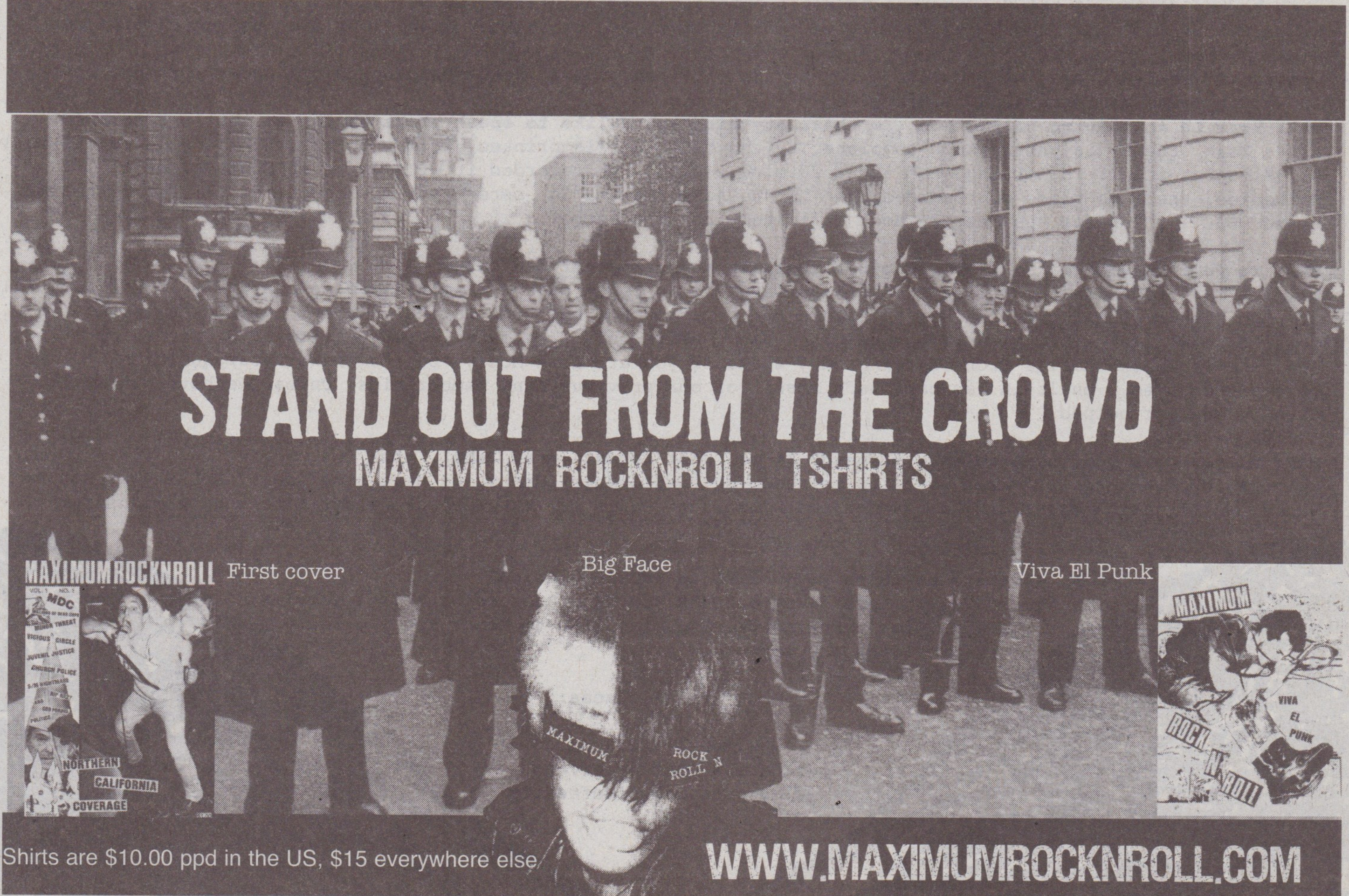
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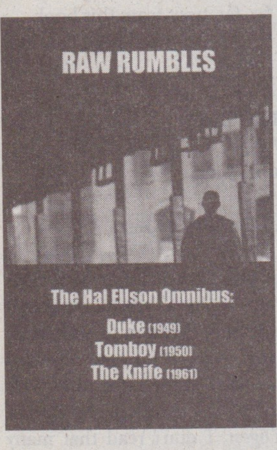


Raw Rumbles: the Hal Ellson Omnibus
Hal Ellson
348 pages • $19.95
Rudos & Rubes Publishing
535 Stevenson St.
San Francisco, CA 94103

Raw Rumbles reprints thrre "juvenile delinquency" novels of Hal Ellson: *Duke* (1949), *Tomboy* (1950) and *The Knife* (1961). Ellson wrote solely within the pulp genre, format, and theme. He also, like fellow novelist of troubled adolescents John Darnielle, worked as a recreational therapist. Ellson split his time writing (a lifelong vocation) and working at Bellevue Hospital in New York City.

Further, publisher Rudos & Rubes offers a house motto: "Our editorial staff consists of unrepentantly dilettante bibliophiles with no interest in searching for the least common denominator of public taste." Judging by their other titles, they are a reprint house, focusing mainly on hard-boiled fiction. The physical properties of this particular book are a disappointment. The page margins (gutters ans spacing between paragraphs) aren't very friendly to the eyes, and the font is a bit big for a writer who uses short, short paragraphs and chapters. I don't think I'm being picky here, like complaining about grammar on lyric sheets. I want independent media to look better than the mainstream fare. That's an unavoidable point.

Duke is his first novel. They've reprinted the preface to the first edition and the lurid glossary of gang terminology still stands up; tight still means friendly. Ellson's tone is as clipped as jazz-june characters, and his lens is both journalist and sociologist—"these gangs exist for the same fundamental purpose, for self-protection; to rob; to establish territorial rights; and to fight. Wars are usually declared because of race friction, girls, and infringement of territory, but most rise out of what seem to be small personal incidents which, however, involve the honor of the gang."

Characters in all three of the novels feel flat as cut-outs. I'll have to agree with Nelson Algren's critique that Ellson is "too much a caseworker, not enough of a novelist." Certain readers might not be looking for the nuance and depth of literary novels, so make of that what you will. Ellson's tone, however, like the threatening use of shadows in noir films, makes the books worth checking out.

In each novel there's a psychological itchiness to the protagonists—worrying about shrinking, sissy hands; Oedipal issues with the mother and stepfather; gender confusion and frustration for the tough girl. It's leaden as any "issues" novel written by an adult for a teen audience. But Ellson's descriptions are unique, arresting: "She laughed nice and low like she talks, like she's got something in her throat that's exciting."

I did like the older brother in *Duke*, giving advice such as, "So you got a join a gang and be blasé…" To which the brother replies, "And you ain't going to get nothing by work, nothing more than peanuts anyhow… White kids got everything. White people run everything. White people own the world." These sweeping critiques were what drew me as a teenager into such novels and crime films—most come across ham-fisted and overblown, but not without nuggets of truth and valid anger.

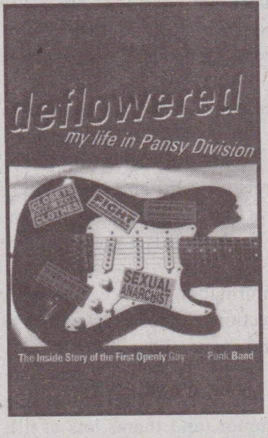
Also great are the lyrical passages amidst the tiresome teenage monologues of bravado, cool visions and dead end options. This paranoid description of our hero's captor is superb: "…his eyes like glass with no color in them, empty like with nothing in back of them, but I know who he is and he looks at me up and down and inside out. It's like getting a pat down with the eyes, a frisk."

Tomboy features a gang deb frustrated with romance, sick of the drunk adults in her family, and rife with nihilistic boredom. But it does end with a rolling boxcar escape. The train, however, seems to be more of the crushing kind, a life on a fixed track with you powerless against its speed, sound, and fury. Again, if you can make it through the unsteady narration and flattened plot, then there's reward.

The last book here is the *The Knife*. More rumbling between the gangs that eventually follows one of the characters through juvie and furtive breakouts. "Frig the whole world." He runs away, but where is there to run to? "I think of home—and ask myself why I got to be in this trouble, why I got to be here. Yeah, it's a crazy world, a stinking crazy world, and I hate it." The story drags, the jail walls don't move.

The novels might be better boiled down even further into short stories—"Want to come with us, baby?" "Yeah, there's nothing else to do."

—Travis Fristoe



Deflowered: My Life in Pansy Division
Jon Ginoli
300 pages • $16.95
Cleis Press
P.O. Box 14697
San Francisco, CA 94114

The DIY punk and hardcore scene presents itself as an alternative from oppressive mainstream culture. However, many people who turn to this scene find that at the core, it very much mimics the systems it wishes to subvert. Queers, people of color, women, and many other minorities are pushed to the margins of a scene that seemed to promise inclusion. Jon Ginoli created an alternative within the alternative when he started the band Pansy Division. As the self-described first openly gay pop punk band, Ginoli brought two worlds together that had originally been miles apart. Pansy Division is nearing its twentieth year anniversary and Ginoli has finally penned the long-overdue history of the band, *Deflowered: My Life in Pansy Division*.

The catalyst for Pansy Division was Ginoli's frustration that his gay and punk identities existed completely exclusive from one another. He did not align himself with the popular gay culture of disco music, clubs, and consumerism, yet he also found himself stifling his sexuality in order to make it in punk rock. Fed up, he decided to create the kind of music he wanted to hear. The result is a band that is unapologetically gay, with upfront lyrics about sex and love, humorous covers of classic punk rock songs that tweak lyrics in order to queer-ify them, and live shows that feature male go-go dancers. Pansy Division had a unique approach to being a band, and that is what makes the book such an interesting read.

The first half of the book is written in a linear narrative, chronicling his childhood in Peoria, Illinois and ending with the band's tour with Green Day, and the second half of the book has a heavy emphasis on tour diaries and song explanations. The writing is clear and engaging, conveying a lifetime of insight without getting weighty or slowing pace. Although at times the tour diaries tend to lose focus, as most diary narratives do, they are an interesting perspective as to what punk was like before the internet age. Not only were they queer pioneers in the punk scene, but there was also a lot more "doing" involved in DIY back then, which is a set of ethics that the band has never strayed from.

Most intriguing is Ginoli's descriptions of the struggles the band encountered. Members of the audience frequently heckled the band, sometimes to the point where violence was threatened, and show promoters attempted to cancel shows once it was discovered that they were a gay band. But Pansy Division is an extremely dedicated, hard-working band and they have survived and persevered. If anything, Ginoli's writing understates the effort that each band member put forth into maintaining a space for a gay band.

Pansy Division gives the DIY punk and hardcore scene much needed depth,

and their legacy is truly inspiring. Ginoli's book is definitely a must-read for any punk that still cares about their scene and is always striving to make it better.

—Krista Ciminera

Banksy Locations and Tours
Martin Bull
176 pages • $20
PM Press
PO Box 23912
Oakland, CA 94623
www.pmpress.org

A postcard-sized full color collection of graffiti locations and photographs, this book reveals an adventuresome glimpse into the street art world of this particular time (mostly 2006 and 2007) and place (London, England). Most of the graffiti photographed here was done by the famed Banksy.

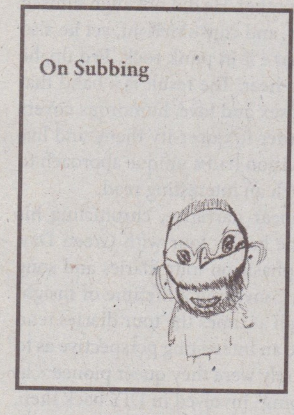
Sitting at home looking at the 100+ photos of this street art/graffiti, instead of wandering the streets of London looking for it, still brings some elements of excitement because of the very nature of its style, including the unique qualities that come as a result of being a public art medium. The author, Martin Bull, writes in the introduction that he is "not that interested in intellectualizing all this," and that's just great because really, I'm not either. I am however super interested in being able to enjoy the glimpses of street art/graffiti that I wouldn't otherwise be able to. For one, I live far across the pond from where these three photo-documented walking tours take place. And for two, the majority of the pieces collected in this book are gone now.

Granted, for those who can ramble upon this living art in person, there is always something new to keep your eyes out for. Bull writes, "The streets (and railway bridges and alleys) are literally awash with graffiti of all styles, plus paste-ups, stickers, installations, art projects, and all sorts of weird and wonderfully creative ramblings." Therefore, for its sole purpose of sharing Bull's geeky passion for this graffiti and his documentation of it, this book itself is a great creative endeavor.

Each photograph is accompanied by location information, brief commentary, its status (if it's still visible or not), and walking directions to the next stop on the tour. The photographs themselves were well shot and are good quality.

Looking at this graffiti, though not seeing it in its more appropriate viewing venue (you know, in person prowling the streets), still shows me its pure, raw, beautiful creativity and talent, its humor (and there's lots of it!), its social commentary, its un-ignorable public presence, its spontaneity and fleeting existence. After reading this book, I now understand how the Banksy phenomenon has taken off. He's created countless top ten list-quality live visual backdrops for any of the best DIY punk soundtracks.

—Jessica Mills



On Subbing The First Four Years
Dave Roche
128 pages • $5
Microcosm Publishing
222 S. Rogers St.
Bloomington, IN 47404-4936

Writer Dave Roche worked with developmentally disabled kids as a substitute teacher in Portland for four years and this cute little book compiles the zine version of these stories with updates and corrected grammar (it's the third printing already!). *On Subbing* has attracted a lot of positive reviews from many in both the punk/DIY world and the educational communities for legitimate reasons, which I'll go into below.

That said, finishing this book was a chore, even though Dave's writing style is breezy and informal. Written as a journal-style zine, the day-by-day entries would make for an interesting two-page spread in another zine, but 120 pages is just too much. Much like an extra-caffeinated personal zine (i.e. any *Cometbus* rip-off), *On Subbing* gets tedious, repetitive, and somewhat self-indulgent after a dozen or so pages. The only way a reader is going to enjoy this is if the reader a) is a teacher, b) is working with developmentally disabled people, or c) is entranced by the shenanigans of a bunch of kids.

Since many of you fit one or more of those categories, here's the good part of the review. His stories of working with hundreds of children with a wide variety of issues chart his successes, his mistakes, and his interactions (bad and good) with teachers, principals, and other parts of the educational system. These journal entries are obviously encouraging to current and aspiring teachers and special education workers—and I definitely appreciate the entries where he dives into balancing his strong DIY bike punk ethics with his day job.

I fit none of those target audiences. I appreciate fellow punk and progressive teachers, but the only children I like are my friends' offspring. I have little tolerance for journal-style zines or repetitive entries about uninteresting subjects. *MRR* readers who have similar tastes should stay far, far away from this book.

—Jesse Luscious

Make a Zine
Bill Brent and Joe Biel
160 pages • $7.00
Microcosm Publishing
222 S. Rogers St.
Bloomington, IN 47404-4936

Most of us have had a torrid affair with zines at some point in our lives. We toss together unedited musings that threaten to embarrass us in the coming years or become obsessed with a particular title. At the same time, with the exception of your *Cometbus, Big Hands*, and *Degrassi Digest*, I don't read that many zines any more. Evidently, I'm not the only one. When I was handing out my zine at a show at the Girl Cave, in DC last month, one scene stalwart said, "You made a zine? Who even does that any more?" This does not bode well for the future relation of this medium to punk spaces. But zine writers are not afraid! Be forewarned, they have their own thriving, mish-mashed community.

Make a Zine!, a new book and command by Bill Brent (of *Black Sheets* zine) and Joe Biel (Microcosm Publishing), walks you through some of the bigger questions you might ask yourself when thinking of self-publishing. How many copies should I make? What questions should be taken into account for optimal layouts? How do I get Nate Powell to do my cover art? Where do I send my zine for distribution? Why do *Cometbus* zines get to look like books, while mine look more like slaughterhouse, recycling bins?

Before delivering praise, I must divulge that I had lunch with the editor (Sparky Taylor), only a few days ago, and that an interview with my more famous sibling is to appear in one of Biel's upcoming books. With that review disclaimer, this little book addresses pretty much any question one might pose on the subject of zine making. The short essays on zine-related subjects, like making comix by Fly, and the illustrations by critically acclaimed zinesters, like Ben Snakepit, keep the book interesting, as well as informative.

It seems like the hows and wherefores of zine-making should be obvious to anyone who has ever held a zine, and that those who haven't probably won't be making one. While some of the information presented in this DIY manual should be obvious to any thinking person, the real value of this book is in its collected knowledge of what has worked in the past and what one might do to make their zine come out in the glorious form they imagined, instead of just making everyone sad. One zine writer I was speaking to the other day has a fear that a book such as this serves as a push to eliminate originality in the medium. Having actually read the book, while it does present guidelines on what the authors think are necessary to producing a good zine, it leaves a lot of room for creative expansion within their proposed limits.

Since you have made it to the book review section of the publication you hold in your hands, you must have a sensitive passion for the darker corners of the medium. Thus, I am not embarrassed to tell you that a few months ago my sister picked up a zine I made when I was seventeen. After looking through it, she said, "It's pretty bad." Obviously, I don't think this book would have helped the content of my writing, but it might have at least taught me how to make a decent looking volume of work.

—Zane Grant

MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

OH HOW TO DO NOW

Five American boys from five different parts of the country enlist in the army and get shipped off to Germany. **Monks: The Transatlantic Feedback** starts with this ordinarily inconsequential fact. When Gary Burger, Larry Clark, Dave Day, Eddie Shaw and Roger Johnston are each asked why they went into the army, the answer was to get away from where they were. Gary makes sure to mention that his decision to join the army was not a patriotic one. Even though they met coincidentally and started a band, they all had pretty much the same attitude at the time. They wanted to get away from where their small towns and see something new. That attitude would naturally influence the music they would eventually make.

Life in the Army in Germany didn't involve fighting. It was a bunch of busy work. Burger recalls time spent washing his truck. His commanding officer would find some dirt under the tires and the whole thing would have to be done again. Johnston recalls weeklong preparations for President Kennedy's visit, which only ended up lasting a matter of minutes. Burger and Day got together to play music on the base after being introduced by the woman who signed out instruments for the GIs to use. After that they started playing out at German GI clubs and eventually got together the full band that would go on to be The Monks.

After being discharged from the Army the band stayed in Germany to continue playing around the country. They were known at the time as the Torquays. The scene in Germany was thriving from the reputation of being the country that discovered the Beatles. There were lots of bands and clubs so to get shows you had to stand out. Two German artists Karl-H Remy and Walter Niemann noticed the band; they were looking for a band for a project. It was from there the Monks were born.

Not once during **Monks: The Transatlantic Feedback** does anyone mention punk. *Black Monk Time* producer Jimmy Bowien says the Monks were the precursor to Heavy Metal. Maybe. Advertiser Charles Wilp says they were early techno. Huh? But there is never a mention of them being an antecedent of punk. It's a little odd since that seems pretty obvious. Maybe it is too obvious. The film does a great job at setting up the unique circumstances that the Monks developed under.

The ultimate reason for owning the **Monks: The Transatlantic Feedback** DVD is two uncut performances of the Monks playing on German TV for the *Beat Club Show* and *Beat Beat Beat*. The band performs three songs on each show. It is here that you really get to see the Monks as they were. They are performing for an odd audience of kids who don't seem to really be paying attention to the band and are almost half-heartedly dancing. The band however is playing like crazy and having a ball. They are all smiles and during close-ups Gary and Eddie both wink at the camera a couple of times. Hans-Joachim Irmler of Faust recalls having seen the Monks on TV when he was fifteen. Seeing it now is amazing. I could only imagine having seen it when it originally aired in 1966. It would have blown my mind. I have been seeing bootlegs of these shows for years so it is great to have them in a pristine version on DVD. (playloud.org)

Somehow the review copy of **Cleveland's Screaming** that I am told was sent to *MRR* never made it to me. Fortunately former ODFx guitarist Tommy Strange remedied that by inviting a few people including me over to his house to watch it. I can't thank him enough.

Cleveland's Screaming focuses on the Cleveland and Akron, OH punk scene of the early '80s. It's very specific and excludes the more famous Cleveland punk bands of the '70s. Those bands are mentioned as a reference, but it is these lesser-known bands that get the focus here. It is a certain time and a place that was exciting and interesting. Punk bands were playing in small places throughout the country each with their own take on the music and politics. The Cleveland/Akron view rebelled against Ronald Reagan and his politics, but was also protective of bands and audience. Spiked wristbands were not allowed in the pit and skinhead attitudes weren't tolerated.

The first reason to love **Cleveland's Screaming** is "off the door". I have never heard of this before and I wouldn't have believed it is there wasn't a great photograph included in the film. It must be a Cleveland/Akron exclusive. I won't it give away the "meaning" in order to make the film more enticing. Those that were there know what I am talking about. It's just too funny.

The second reason is all the great footage of the bands. I am told that one woman videotaped a bunch of the shows and it is all her footage here. I wish I knew her name since I always want to credit camera people, especially of punk footage. The people who shoot that stuff always get forgotten when the tapes get traded and they shouldn't be. It is through this footage that you get a real sense of what it was like at one of the shows. **Cleveland's Screaming** includes the obligatory interviews with band members as they are now, but what they say gets the point across more because of the live footage.

Tommy Strange tells me that **Cleveland's Screaming** is not available on DVD because no one wanted to distribute it. How can that be possible? This is a great punk movie.

Pansy Division claims to be the first openly gay punk rock band. While that might be arguable, Pansy Division definitely put their gay sexuality out there in a very blatant way. They weren't afraid to be honest and reveal themselves. It is a rarity in most bands of any genre and always a refreshing thing to witness. Well, at least for some. I bet it still makes many others very nervous.

Pansy Division: Life In A Gay Rock Band tells the band's story. Started by Jon Ginoli after he moved to San Francisco from Peoria, IL. He was frustrated with the gay scene's emphasis on disco music and showtunes. He liked rock and punk. It began as a one-man band with Ginoli singing and playing guitar backed by a cassette tape. Bassist Chris Freeman joined the band after answering Ginoli's ad looking for musicians. Drummers were harder to come by so the film is accented by the band's frustrating attempts to secure a talented and reliable gay drummer.

Pansy Division's local popularity grew and local record labels started releasing singles by the band. They eventually signed to Lookout Records who released their first album *Undressed*. When Lookout's style of pop punk takes off with Green Day's popularity in the mid-'90s, Pansy Division takes off as well.

My favorite part of **Pansy Division: Life In A Gay Rock Band** is when the band goes to record with Steve Albini. One of the band members videotapes entering Albini's studio starting from across the street, through the front door, up the stairs, by some people hanging out, down the hall way, through a door leading down stairs to the recording studio. As someone who will never record with Steve Albini nor probably ever hang out at his studio, I was fascinated to see it. That scene and when Freeman recalls touring with Green Day. The jocks in the front would give the band the finger and Freeman asked how many girls were in the audience. After a big cheer, he said see these guys in the front with their fingers in the air? Don't go out with them. Also Rob Halford appearing with Pansy Division at a San Diego gay pride show to perform their version of Judas Priest's "Breaking The Law."

There is so much to like about Pansy Division. Personally I wish the music were harder, faster, more powerful and not so pop punk. But my musical tastes aside, **Pansy Division: Life In A Gay Rock Band** tells an inspirational story to people of any sexual orientation. (alternativetentacles.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

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24 INCH PYTHONS / PRETTY BOY THORNSON AND THE FALLEN ANGELS – split EP
The band names could be better. Despite some of the (at times contrived-sounding) gruff country vocals with an occasional bar rock twist, PRETTY BOY THORNSON rocks a pretty spot-on and enjoyable DWIGHT YOAKUM cover. I remember hearing some acoustic record the dudes from TILTWHEEL/DAN PADILLA did under a different name; this side reminds me of that record, but this is a little more country. Any avid RUMBLESEAT fans may also want to take notice. 24 INCH PYTHONS' songs are as bad as their name. Perhaps worse. It's in everyone's best interest that I forego a description of their side. (P$)
(ADD)

2:20 – "God Natt Til Alle Barma" – EP
I instantly recognized the vocalist as the singer of CAPTAIN NOT RESPONSIBLE (who I'm a big fan of) so I was more than delighted by this. 2:20 plays typical Norwegian melodic hardcore punk fare along the lines of CAPTAIN NOT RESPONSIBLE, SO MUCH HATE, LIFE…BUT HOW TO LIVE IT? (but without sounding like THE GITS covering RUSH), 6000 CRAZY, et al. If you are not familiar with these sounds and are a fan of, say, LEATHERFACE or FUNERAL ORATION, then climb aboard and enjoy the ride. I promise it won't disappoint. (RR)
(Sjakk Matt Platter)

19 WIOSEN – "11 Zim (1993-2004)" CD
This CD compiles some early cassette-only and split releases from this Polish band (their name means "19 Springs"). 19 WIOSEN played upbeat, herky-jerky, melodic punk. There's the occasional hint of ska-punk guitar here and there (it was the '90s, after all, and even Poland wasn't immune) but without actually crossing the line into ska. Curiously enough, they also manage to throw in some classical-influenced organ parts. At some point during this period they brought in a girl singer, and the overall sound changed from angry political punk to poppy post-punk. The lyrics are all in Polish so I can't understand much of what's going on. I would never suggest that bands should sing in anything other than their native language unless they choose to, but that's probably why 19 WIOSEN was probably pretty much unheard of outside Poland. The band took a break in 2004 but is playing again and continues to this day with an adjusted lineup. Now that the internet has removed some of the physical barriers preventing Eastern European bands from attaining a Western audience, perhaps they'll reach more ears. (AM)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

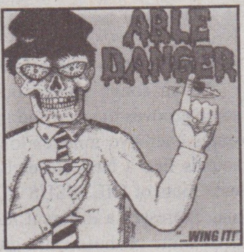
ABADDON – "Godzina Krzywd" LP
So, ABADDON, the incredible Polish band whose sole vinyl release was 1986's *Wet Za Wet* LP, is back! For those unfamiliar, *Wet Za Wet* is one of the greatest European hardcore records of the '80s. Opting for a more straightforward approach, ABADDON was very different than their fellow countrymen's dark, snowed-in punk sound back then, so it's ironic that *Godzina Krzywd* goes with the classic Cold-War-era Polish punk sounds—vocals that sound like they're barked from a grizzly bear, discordant off-time guitar parts, some metallic elements, and that mechanically hollow KILLING JOKE influence. For a bunch of geezers, this record is really fresh sounding and quite inspired, and I highly suggest looking into it. (JU)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

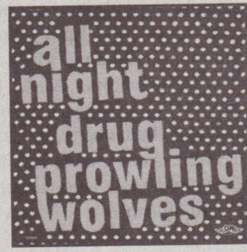
ABLE DANGER – "…Wing It!" EP
Buffalo, NY punk with metallic production, vocals that try to sound like GG ALLIN, and lyrics about working shitty jobs and degenerates who drink too much. One song deals with disaster that comes from our post-industrial age, called "Beef on Weck." Check this one out only if you're *really* into working class punk. (PL)
(Feral Kid)

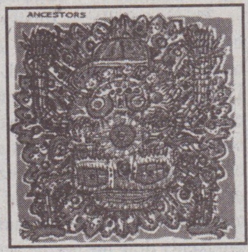
ACCELERATORS – CD
A current band from the Netherlands, these guys do the RAMONES-influenced punk thing. Pretty good in the WEASEL/QUEERS vein. Tight, catchy stuff with some cool guitar lines in the mix. THE ACCELERATORS are on the up-tempo side of this crowded genre. (RL)
(Stardumb)

ADD/C – "Keepin' It Real" LP
I've been seeing or hearing the name ADD/C for a year or so, but I haven't listened to them until now. For some reason, I thought they were a noise band, but I'm really not sure what led me to think that. Noisy, yes, but definitely not a noise band. These guys sound like what would happen if you crossed a less catchy SEXY with KILLER DREAMER and made it grittier and a bit more spastic. (BD)
(Dead Broke)

AGAINST ALL MY FEARS – "XXVII" LP
A well-written and performed album that falls in the mid-tempo, pour-my-heart-out-and-right-into-this-song range of heavy hardcore. A bit melodramatic at times, to be honest, but all in all a solid release. Slight nods to bands like EARTH CRISIS, SNAPCASE, and THE REFUSED, but not dated as that statement would lead you to believe. Definitely a modern band with an up-to-date sound and approach, AGAINST ALL MY FEARS focuses on the heavy and brooding as opposed to the aggressive. This is the first album from these Santiago, Chile natives, with most songs sung in Spanish, and I'm curious to see where they take it in the future. I think if they got decent distribution here in the US, they'd do quite well with "the kids." (RM)
(Amendment)







ALL NIGHT DRUG PROWLING WOLVES – CD

ALL NIGHT DRUG PROWLING WOLVES from Atlanta plays pop rock stuff that falls in between SUGAR and THE HOLD STEADY. Material-wise this is uneven with some strong songs and some bad songs. Certainly a band to watch if they can take it up a notch, although they're not so much punk. (RL)
(Colonel)

ALL OR NOTHING HC – "California Bleeding" CD

Fronted by ex-columist Renae, ALL OR NOTHING HC have been pushing SoCal hardcore for the past few years through the band and her label On The Rag. In the mold as NAKED AGGRESSION, who was doing this type of thing a few years before, these guys are more direct and aggressive. Throat-shredding vocals over some fast hardcore that brings to mind bands from the '90s like ANTISCHISM and AUS ROTTEN. It gets pretty same-y, but the great production and smart lyrics carry it through. (TB)
(On The Rag)

ANCESTORS – "Nightfall" EP

Seven songs shoved onto one little record with some grooves to spare and impressively including two songs over two minutes long. This Toronto act sorta sounds like a late-'80s/early-'90s Touch & Go band with hints of DIE JESUS ACID. Each song is distinct and expresses a different idea. ANCESTORS coulda used some of those extra grooves on the wax to give you a second to breathe, but it's more effective that they didn't. Each song starts like a pleasant punch in the face before you fully absorb the previous jam. (MU)
(self-released)

ANGUISH – "Within The Darkness" EP

While you have to absolutely *crank* your stereo to even hear it, it's worth turning this Detroit band's debut EP way up to blast these three tracks of raw metal-crust fusion. Death metal-ish hoarse vocals scowl over the top of this grimy hardcore charge, as guitar solos squeak and squeal over the distorted mass of mid-tempo pounding, which features an appropriately blown-out recording. A solid mix of good songwriting, complexity, and just raw overdrive. Liberty-spiked skeletons, bullet belts, lyrics about apocalyptic future and well, *death! Death!* Limited to 500 with cool splattered vinyl and a logo-stickered bag. Move fast! (KS)
(World Funeral)

ANTIDOTIUM – "Testowane Na Ludziach" –LP

This is so killer!!! Totally impassioned Polish hardcore punk with similarities to POST REGIMENT, yet on their own trip and sound. Imagine the EL BANDA LP from 2006, but with a more straightforward hardcore edge and some surprise elements tossed into a few songs. Go ahead and buy two copies of this record, because you're going to squeeze every ounce of life out of the platter as it is one of those LPs you put on at a party and someone inevitably spills beer on, or you drunkenly drag the needle across it to play a song over and over. This is also the record that gets put on when you're cooking a large meal with friends and some oil or flour gets into the grooves. So you see, after you've exhausted all playability out of this thing, you're going to want a back up. (RR)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

APPROACH – "Watching It Fall" EP

This sounds like early-'90s Nemesis Records style hardcore, or maybe a better description would be somewhere between JUDGE and STRIFE. The recording has that reverb effect of *Bringin' It Down*, but done well. APPROACH plays a few broke-ass metal riffs that had me cringing a couple times, but all in all this is a great release. If you want some tough, late-'80s sounding straight edge, pick this one up. (PL)
(Amendment)

ASHTAROTH / LANDLORD – split EP

I'm going to start with ASHTAROTH, who was introduced to this reviewer by a polite little handwritten note stating "Native American Black Metal. Hope you like it." With that kind of grace preceding any listen, I immediately decided I liked them and began concocting scenarios in my head about these Arizona desert dudes and how potentially *evil* their track contribution to this split would be! They certainly succeeded in spookin' me out with some menacing sleeve art; an 1863 portrait of a demon (serpent in hand!) riding a large rat-animal coupled with the essentially non-legible metal script bearing their band name. Check, check, and check—all things leading to a real winner. Once I listened to their tune, all expectations were exceeded. Pummeling pace, killer solo work, nasty vocals—these guys have done their homework and stand up nicely next to black metal stalwarts across the board. The other side of this disc contains a couple awesome tracks from fellow Copper Staters LANDLORD. A rad mix of hardcore and traditional metal that could be classified as strictly metal, I guess; except I can't help but be reminded of the COLEMAN / THREE STUDIES FOR A CRUCIFIXION split LP from years past. Screamy female vokillz with an overall stripped-down and desperately intense sound. Adding to the similarities is the fact that the songs were recorded live to a four-track, so I'm not sure if this is how they always sound, but it's fucking great—super raw but clean. Real high marks on this one! (RM)
(self-released)

ASSASINATION / TWISTED SYSTEM – split EP

A Sweden/Canada crust pairing from our pals at Unrest. Thanks, fellas! ASSASINATION plays rampaging ScandiCrust with a vibe that is vaguely MOB 47, even if the speed and intensity might not reach that level. A constant hiss of cymbals, snarled vocals over bouncing D-tåkt beats, and tinny solos to complete the package. TWISTED SYSTEM leans in STATE OF FEAR's general direction…male/female vocals and decidedly more metal on the guitars. They've got good riffs, personal lyrics, and a solid drummer; that's often all you really need. It's solid shit, though I confess that I prefer the more barebones approach of the Swedes. (WN)
(Unrest)

THE AVERSIONS – "Ex Nihilo Nihil" LP

Storming out of Quebec, Canada, THE AVERSIONS absolutely rip it up on this new full-length LP!! This reminds me of my days in NYC a few years back, when Dot-Dash shows were abundant and featured bands like THE SPITS, THE BLACK LIPS, THE TAMPOFFS, and so many more… Sometimes this style of frantic rock 'n' roll loses my attention when it gets too spastic and retarded, but THE AVERSIONS manage to walk that fine line between too much chaos and straight-up rock 'n' roll for the majority of this record. Top honors for the songs "Rififi" and "Don Juan in Hell" which are both scorching hot!! If this album is any indication, I'd bet the farm that these guys put on a helluva live show!! (ML)
(Sonik's Chicken Shrimp)

THE AX – "Our Queen of Dirt" CD

I don't really know what to make of this one… Sounds like Kim Gordon's vocals (I have no idea why I'm hearing this, but there is somehow a SONIC YOUTH sound in there) over off-time BOTCH riffs played by two grungers on a mix of heroin, codeine cough syrup, and bathtub crank. This one just goes over my head. (JU)
(Whoa! Boat)

BEAT BEAT – "Without Choo" EP

"Without You" is one of those songs that would actually be a hit in a just (meaning meritocratous) universe. The song is as infectious as the glam gem of your choice, with a relentless beat and perfect multi-tracked snotty vocals. The other songs are all real good, especially the frenzied pair on the flip, if not as instantly catchy. I seem to like everything that Bachelor Records puts out, but this is especially good. (DD)
(Bachelor / Milk & Chocolate)

THE BEAVERS – "Silly Girls" EP

Garage rock from the Netherlands. Two vocal numbers and one instrumental. Catchy, fun, and the singer's accent makes it seem a bit weird. (CK)
(Frantic City)

BERNAYS PROPAGANDA – "Happiness Machines" CD

This Macedonian group plays a blend of post-punk and contemporary disco, which is so popular in today's indie scene. Their song titles and lyric translations have strong political and social critiques that are presented by their female singer. BERNAYS PROPAGANDA's music brings to mind pieces of FUGAZI, LE TIGRE, FRANZ FERDINAND, and GANG OF FOUR. I guess if you're gonna have dance music, you might as well have socially conscious dance music! (RK)
(Moonlee)

BETON / CAD – split CD

Here we have two Slovakian bands that both play down-tuned, fast and furious, very well recorded crust. This is pretty good, although I can't understand the lyrics so I can't really say that I love it. There are certain bands that have a sound that is good to any listener despite language barriers, but I find with most crust I have to be able to read the lyrics to relate to the music. Both bands here are good at what they do though. (WK)
(Smyt)

THE BETTER TO SEE YOU WITH – LP

Wow. I generally hate to give negative reviews, but I have to make an exception here. This is absolutely the worst record I've ever had to listen to all the way through. Bad wannabe noise rock shit combined with bad math rock that doesn't go anywhere. The singer randomly goes back and forth between annoying screechy vocals and badly sung vocals. This is utter shit. How did this get put out on vinyl? Does anyone actually like this band? Inquiring minds want to know. This was twenty-two minutes and thirty-two seconds of my life that I will never get back. I implore you not to make the same mistake. *Avoid at all costs.* (VX)
(Celestial Gang)

BILLY RAYGUN – "Seasick" EP

In most scenes around the country, maybe even around the world, bands made up of kids in high school are usually overlooked. It's a stigma that is hard for many people to get past before making their mind up on a band. However you may look at these groups of kids doing what they enjoy is up to you, but hopefully you give them a fair chance. BILLY RAYGUN is a

band of high school kids who made a record that's pretty good for a first EP. It's all here: catchy melodies, requisite songs about girls and coffee, and a dirty recording to wrap it all up. Keep it up, guys—I can only guess things will continue to get better on the next record. (BD)
(John Wilkes Booth)

MAC BLACKOUT – "The Rabid Babies" CD
Fifteen more weirdo machinations from Chicago's favorite freak. The songs on *The Rabid Babies* vary somewhat from track to track, but all in all it ends up sounding like dance music made to entertain the machines that keep you alive when you become a human vegetable. "Who's Gonna Set the Fire" invokes the anxiety of a trip to the dentist, and is, no exaggeration here, making my teeth really uncomfortable. An uneasy listen, to say the least. (JU)
(Dead Beat)

BLACK TUSK / THE HOLY MOUNTAIN – split EP
BLACK TUSK has a huge, rumbling, swampy hardcore sound with anthemic songs featuring gang vocals and twin lead guitars. They've definitely got one foot in Southern rock 'n' roll, but through a filter of metal and hardcore not unlike fellow Savannah, Georgia bands KYLESA and BARONESS. This is a great mix of sounds. THE HOLY MOUNTAIN also has a huge hardcore sound with hints of crust. These tracks also remind me a bit of KYLESA. Excellent 7" with artwork by John Baizley of BARONESS. (MH)
(No Idea)

BLANK DOGS – "Under and Under" CD
The first track sounds kind of like DEVO or CAUSEY WAY with twangy surf guitars. There's some keyboard craziness and vocal weirdness reminding me a little of FORESKIN 500. I'm not sure this is strictly *Maximum Rocknroll* material...Police! (AD)
(In the Red)

BLANK DOGS – "Under and Under" CD
I thought some of his other releases divined crucial possibilities for fundamental changes in human comportment and had potential to change tha game. I don't think this CD will change anything or make trees grow, but I do think this shit can be ridiculously good. Some of what I've heard before ("Setting Fire to Your House") seems to lose some of its charm when digitized. This reminds me less of some of the warbly warmth of the Woodsist LP and more of the clearly recorded guitar-driven songs of the *On Two Sides* LP. You should already know if you want this. Sure, the dude releases way too much material, but most of it's pretty fucking good. This one is good, too (but not as great as THE MAYFAIR SET's 7"). (P$)
(In the Red)

BLOCKBASTARD – "Apocalypse Down" CD
While nowhere near as overtly metallic or brutal, this Spanish band's fifteen original tracks remind me of later RATOS DE PORÃO. It's unmistakably from an '80s hardcore direction, but has flourished into something with a bit more complexity, with innovative songwriting resulting from the pure technical ability of the musicians and the professional setting of the recording, and similar deep, throaty, gnarly vocals spit out from the singer!!! BLOCKBASTARD continually shifts gears between fast hardcore and mid-tempo sing-along punk with inventive playing and great intros and song structures. The pro recording might contain some of the more hectic parts from getting really out of control, but the songs are largely fresh from the twists they throw in each track similar to some of the current best Brazillian hardcore. Lyrics are entirely Spanish and BLOCKBASTARD rounds out the CD with a cover of OHLO SECO's classic "Nada." Cool! (KS)
(Potencial Hardcore)

BLOOD STAINED REALITY –"Fuck You Go Die" EP
Fast-paced snot punk hardcore that brings early GRIMPLE to mind. Great guitar sound, rapid drumming; six tracks of pig-bashing punk to add to the collection. (MS)
(Esco Zoo)

BOUNCING SOULS – "20th Anniversary Record Pt. 1" EP
I always had a soft spot for these guys, but do you really think they warrant the status of having a 20-year anniversary release? What have we turned into? Obviously, we can only hope to ape the established mainstream music circus. Saying that, you get four very well produced catchy melodic punk songs with group harmonies and a ton of hooks. They are a good band, yes, but a four-part 20th Anniversary record set with covers that make up a big BOUNCING SOULS 20th Anniversary emblem? (AD)
(Chunksaah)

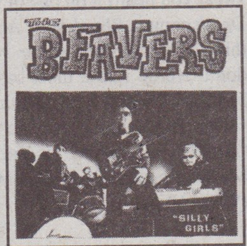
BOZIDAR BRAZDA – "Taste"
Both sides of this single are marked as the A-side and both sides are in fact the same one minute long song. Just one verse repeated a couple of times with the bass and vocals getting a little higher for a few seconds. I really love how this expresses a single thought and feeling. It doesn't get more simple and plain than this. It's very catchy and pretty. Soft sung vocals over a simple drum beat with a few distorted bass notes that sound like they were recorded underwater. Artwork and information included are appropriately as minimal as the song itself. If you can find one of the 200 copies, I recommend it. (MU)
(Eat East Wet West, no info)

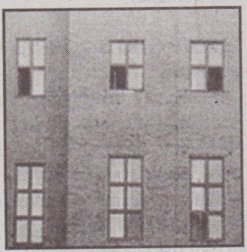
BRAINWORMS – "II: Swear To Me" LP
Great hardcore in the *Give Me Back/HeartattaCk* post-RITES OF SPRING vein featuring ex-members of STOP IT! But this is way less plodding than I remember STOP IT! sounding, and some of the riffs are way more killer and more pronounced in the mix. A WOW OWLS reference wouldn't be too off base. I really liked BRAINWORMS' last LP, and I was stoked to see that on this outing these fellas had the sense not to put the same songs on both sides of the record. There are a few times I wouldn't mind hearing the singer develop a little bit more of a flair for melody, but most of the time he solidly rocks shit. The lyrics are really clever and the music is mind-blowing at times and always well played. These dudes are masterfully fluent in the language of epic riffs and post hardcore hits. Great shit, recommended. (P$)
(Rorschach)

THE BRAT ATTACK – "Those Who Sow Sorrow Shall Reap Rage" CD
Right-on anarcho revolutionary ideals set to slick, accessible pop/skate punk. As the BRAT ATTACK is from Winnipeg, it behooves me to bring up PROPAGHANDI before mentioning other bands, but some that come to mind are STRIKE ANYWHERE and ANTI-FLAG. Some rad, raging freak-out vocals make brief appearances. Overall, if you want CrimethInc-esque politics in your music, but are more into NOFX than crust, this should be your number one jam. (AA)
(Rebel Time)

BRILLIANT COLORS – "Highly Evolved/Takes So Little"
This one's hard to pin down. This band jams (by way of a novel approach) a style that parties with some of punk's auditory affinity for the reverb-laden pop sounds of bands like the CRYSTAL STILTS (whose first record was pretty killer) or maybe even some stuff from the K Records catalog. They round out their sound with a punk sensibility not uncommon to a band like COMET GAIN. While this record is reverby and poppy, it's also punk sounding in a way that other bands treading similar territory (like THE VIVIAN GIRLS or CRYSTAL STILTS) don't necessarily seem to be. Two songs, both are great. Recommended. (P$)
(Captured Tracks)

BRUCEXCAMPBELL – "We Are All Kamikaze" CD
When will the plague of bands named after wacky celebrities end? Damn you, CHARLES BRONSON! Despite saddling themselves with the cliché-as-fuck name, BRUCEXCAMPBELL produces some pretty all-right grind. I'd love to know if the low vocals are processed, 'cuz if they're not that's pretty fucking sick. The production and riffs are a little too clean-sounding to really make the record go off, but the drumming is pretty dope. If they wrote a little less like MAGRUDERGRIND and a little more like CAR-





CASS, they'd slay. As it is, this is OK. Needs more mosh parts. (AU)
(RSR)

BUNDLE OF FAGS – "Art School Asshole/Attitude"

One of those records by a band with a *dumbfuckingname*, rudimentary, crudely recorded songs that tiptoe right up to the line of inept/idiotic, but they definitely got it under control. Get it? Primitive in that way that makes certain punk records *just right*. One of those records that, if you didn't know better, you'd swear you heard it on one of those goddamn *Killed By Death* comps, *Bloodstains Across Someplace* or something like that, somewhere. Nice, sneering vocals that don't overdo it, the most basic drumming, and just a handful of chords banged out. That's all you need. Two songs. Big-hole 45 with no information whatsoever. "Art School Asshole" is the clear winner here. Pure Midwest punk brilliance. Limited to 300 copies. (IS)
(Weird Hugs)

CAPER – "Punks vs. Government" EP

Easily the worst release I've heard on RSR, a label that has put out a ton of great releases for many years. CAPER has the singer of early grindcore/death metal band RIGHTEOUS PIGS, so I was looking forward to this. The sound is raw (or is that dated?) and mixes hardcore with the RIGHTEOUS PIGS and PANTERA. There are thrashy crossover moments and an in-your-face feeling, but it comes across stiff and falls flat. I need to take this off the turntable. (MH)
(RSR)

CARLOS DUNGA / DEEP THROAT – split CD

This CD gives us three short and sweet songs each from two Italian thrash bands. They describe themselves as "thrash-soccer punx," but I wouldn't take that to mean they are jocks, or at least you can assume they're not by DEEP THROAT's song "Jocks Sux." Even still, the pictures on the front and back cover are cartoons of people playing soccer and CARLOS DUNGA's band logo is a skull and crossbones, but the skull is actually a soccer ball. As far as the music goes, both bands play some pretty typical thrash. Although DEEP THROAT can bounce back and forth from light-hearted Halloween music to blast-beats, these guys get kind of goofy sometimes. CARLOS DUNGA is more straightforward thrash. Good stuff, it'll get them folks circle-pitting for sure. (FS)
(Andromeda)

CHEAP GIRLS – "Better Thoughts Instead/Modern Faces"

Can't say I'm digging the sound. Not much punk is evident; it comes off like PAVEMENT without the twists or a lackluster later HÜSKER DÜ. It's all too '90s college rock for my harsh buds, a genre that unfortunately seems to be making a comeback. File right beside SLOAN and GODS EYE. (SD)
(Art of the Underground)

CLAYSEA – "Slave State" EP

CLAYSEA is a recent addition to the ever-healthy Japanese crust-core scene. The sound here is raw, thick, and burly, with the vocalist bouncing from guttertal grunts to more of a yell. I'd peg this one somewhere between the DIS-CIMEX sound and something more metallic and heavier, like EFFIGY. Not reinventing the wheel, but I really like it and have spun this record a lot. It's worth tracking down if you're into the crust-core thing. (JU)
(Detonate)

COCHE BOMBA – "Vectores de la Muerte" LP

Everything about this release blew me away. The packaging—each side of the cover has a drawing of a person's face and flaps that open up to another drawing of the same person, one as satan and one as the undead. The white vinyl looks like either hair or paintbrushes. The music—fast hardcore, fastcore, and powerviolence, but there is a progressive sound with some odd time changes and some wonderfully spazzy (not SPAZZ) songs. The band is from Lyon and lyrics are sung in French, Spanish, and English. This was recorded back in 2002 but is just seeing the light of day. The last track is a WARHEAD cover. I'm going to run and get myself a copy. (MH)
(La Distro)

CONSTANT STATE OF TERROR –"War Without End" EP

These Brighton punks have a great old-style English crust sound. *War Without End* recalls DOOM or a way faster ANTISECT. Their recording especially reminds me of UK bands from the mid '80s to very early '90s. CONSTANT STATE OF TERROR is scrappy and really pissed sounding. I have had the pleasure of witnessing their live performances, which were really intense and great. May I also add that the lyrics are long, but still retain awesome choruses and match the music well? The only problem I have is the artwork; I feel a band that does music this well can do better with the layout. A cool record by any means. (WK)
(Inflamable Material, no address)

THE COPYRIGHTS – "Dead Flowers/Carmelita"

Unless you're living under a rock, you probably know the deal with the Art of the Underground Single Series: buy a subscription and get a 7" in the mail each month for a year. Sometimes the records rule, sometimes they're lackluster at best. Fortunately, volume 40 here is a total keeper, and both songs are covers! Side A has a rad version of THE ROLLING STONES' "Dead Flowers," while the B-side is appropriately more subdued take on WARREN ZEVON's "Carmelita." I always like "Dead Flowers," and while I had definitely heard "Carmelita" before, I never knew it was a WARREN ZEVON song. Great song selections, dudes! (BD)
(Art of the Underground)

CORTEZ THE KILLER / PRETTY BOY THORSON AND THE FALLING ANGELS – split EP

We got here a split 7" of two Minnesota bands, put out by a record label from Tampa Bay. Go figure. PRETTY BOY THORSON AND THE FALLING ANGELS play two songs of the same fast-paced, tried-and-true country-punk they are known for. This is exactly what you would expect from these guys: upbeat songs about feeling lonely, making mistakes, and leaving town. The songwriting is good, so if you read *MRR* and have a soft spot for old-timer country or just like feeling bad about yourself, this is recommended. CORTEZ THE KILLER plays some real lo-fi '60s garage kind of stuff. It's super poorly recorded with a lot of fuzz. The vocals are real up-front in the recording but everything else is real muffled, like the speakers are blown. It's OK for what it is. (FS)
(ADD)

THE CRAWLERS – "Level the Forest" LP

THE CRAWLERS have got all the early-'80s hardcore bases covered. *Level the Forest* has got your mid-tempo BLACK FLAG-esque punk songs melded in with more fast-paced POISON IDEA or ARTICLES OF FAITH songs. The lyrics on this record are classic pissed-off punk anthems that say fuck off to fascists and conservatives, with songs like "Escape from Sobibor," "Crook Book," and "Political Evangelist." Nothing really here that hasn't already been done before, but if you want a well recorded, well written punk record check it out. (PL)
(Blind Spot)

CROSS STITCHED EYES – "Coranach" LP

This LP is the culmination of a couple recordings from this cross-continental band. That is not to say that *Coranach* lacks any sort of vision or execution; in fact I would say that this record is very premeditated and delivers a perfect replica of CROSS STITCHED EYES' vision. Their influences are RUDIMENTARY PENI and KILLING JOKE à la ZYGOTE, which one member was in a long ago. *Coranach* is well recorded and has enough ambience and heavy riffage that it is easily digested and leaves a lasting impression. It has a gothic overtone, which will undoubtedly be the norm in many bands over the next few years. CROSS STITCHED EYES is a bit derivative of its influences, but that can also be a good thing. I would say *Coranach* is one of the best records Alternative Tentacles has released in the last five years. (WK)
(Alternative Tentacles)

CRUDE – "Attitude" LP

Now this is a fucking treat—a reissue of what I feel is CRUDE's high-water mark, which was originally released in 2000. This style of Japanese hardcore has always flawlessly melded melody via catchy guitar leads/solos, with an unfuckwithably relentless, raging fury, and *Attitude* captures and showcases this ability like no other. Fuck, this is good. Perfect, even. If you're not already familiar with this fantastic record, straight off the bat you may hear a couple riffs in the first two songs that sound incredibly familiar. Well, that's 'cause a band you probably know and love borrowed them and you've heard 'em a million times. (JU)
(Feral Ward)

CUTDOWN – CD

Finnish mosh! Heavy guitar, lotsa triplets and smashing/crashing cymbals, growled vocals and (on cue) breakdowns. Throughout their album, Helsinki's overweight sportswear advocates breach such overlooked and regretfully neglected topics such as enemies from the past (in the scene), true friendship, failure not being an option, having one's back up against the proverbial wall (shit!), and trust (losing it, having it, needing it, etc.). If you've ever heard MADBALL, CUTDOWN is cut from the same cloth…exact same cloth…after it's been all worn out and used up. This '90s thuggish brand of moshcore is just not that impressive to me anymore, and this fucking record especially! Non-existent art, generic and boring lyrics, elementary songwriting that, personally speaking, adds up to absolutely the blandest album I've come across in a very long time. No bueno. (RM)
(Full House)

CUTTER – "Slang" EP

Most of these songs reminded me of the kind of damaged noise that WALLS is coming around with these days. Although that's not any type of comparison, CUTTER is way less crush and somewhat more careless punk, but it's just what popped into my head. This EP as a whole is strange and disjointed, with paranoid lyrics and vocals that are very prominent throughout each song, while the music is rather eclectic in style. Touches of FLAG and thrash and chaos. Great,

strong drumming (ex-WIVES) that really lets the rest of the band stay loose during each track. A weird record that has a weird place in my heart. Apparently the band has a new singer; check it out. (RM)
(self-released, no info)

CZOSNEK – "Maras" CD
Heavy, mid-paced, metallish hardcore from Poland is what we have here. I don't really quite know what to make of this. It's not in the '90s vein of INTEGRITY or EARTH CRISIS, and it's definitely not modern mallcore or trashy early metalcore like BIOHAZARD, but rather somewhere in between all of that. There's not anything particularly wrong with CZOSNEK, but they just don't grab me. After the eleven album tracks, there are four "Maras Extra" tracks of electronic remixes that I definitely could have lived without. Following that are two computer-readable tracks: a video (fairly standard I suppose) and a *video game*. Weird. No, I didn't play it; I haven't played video games since NES, sorry. (VX)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

D-CLONE – "Drop a Noise Bomb" EP
I feel like someone's been hitting me with hammers for the past six or so minutes—all nice and warm from the endorphins kicking in, but still a little brutalized. Japan's D-CLONE makes quite a racket for a three-piece, blanketing their ferocious blasts of noise-not-music with a sea of hiss, feedback, and other appropriate accoutrements. While they're one of many bands currently playing this style, they're certainly among the best. D-CLONE has perfected the art of employing noise and effects as instruments, letting them compliment breaks and using them to add dynamism to their chaos-overdosed songs. Throughout the five tracks, the guitarist hits a few quick, well placed dive-bombs, sneaks in some frenzied solos, and allows the feedback to peak out when things could get boring. The drumming also stands out from the sea of weak-wristed D-beating minions; the drums are hit with command and precision, and the rolls are especially notable. *Drop a Noise Bomb* is a legitimately awesome 7" and I'd recommend it not only to fans of the noisy D-beat genre, but also to any fan of hardcore punk. (CI)
(Damaging Noise)

DEAD GHOSTS – "Bad Vibes/May Day"
Lordy, I like this one! Garage punk leaning more towards ethereal than snotty, with tons of reverb and a shot of rhythm and blues, real good. Somewhere between the BLACK LIPS, THE VIVIAN GIRLS, and DEMON'S CLAWS, just to give you some idea. I hope to hear more from these guys. (DD)
(Yakisakana)

DEAD NOISE – "Noise Noise Noise" EP
Ah goddamnit, I'm such a sucker for this shit. Totally fucking blown-out, barely controlled chaos from "LA's best and only crasher crust band." You know the drill (or if you don't, you fucking should): clean-ish bass, braindrill fuzz guitar, pots 'n' pans drumming, and screaming over it all. Total glue-huffing DISORDER/EU'S ARSE/GLOOM worshipping madness with (intentionally) mangled English lyrics. This was recorded with their old guitar player, who was apparently even flakier than the rest of the band. I saw them last summer as a three-piece and they were even better. Sadly this record was limited to 200 and is already sold out, so put it on your want list and wait for the next one. (AU)
(Damaging Noise)

DEAF WISH – "Deaf News" EP
An interesting combination of musical styles on this record. It starts off with an indie rock instrumental that builds into crescendo, then goes into a thrashy punk noise tune with hardcore grumbling and screaming. Then turn it over and the song is an earnest '80s college rock type with vocals similar to early REPLACEMENTS or VOLCANO SUNS, but more sincere. It is nice to see such genre busting in three songs. Their live shows must be fun. (CK)
(Stained Circles)

DEATHCAGE – "Chaos Nightrider" EP
These Aussies make no secret of their love for that uniquely late-'80s/early-'90s brand of Japanese hardcore commonly referred to as "Burning Spirits" style. Think super anthemic tunes with tons of group choruses and wicked guitar leads. For the most part they succeed admirably at the task. The leads they use are interesting in that they seem to be almost more informed by NWOBHM style than J-punk, giving the whole thing (especially the first track "Burning the Midnight") a kind of DEATH SIDE-meets-DIAMOND HEAD quality. My favorite was the title track, which is also the shortest—it whips right along with a fist-pumping energy that totally captures the essence of the style. The singer (Spider, who is incidentally also a really great punk artist) has nailed the slurring vocal style of DEATH SIDE's Ishiya. I would love to see this band bring it live. (AU)
(Schizophrenic)

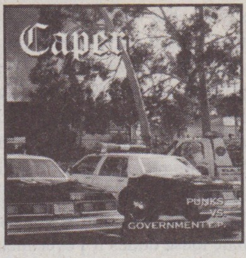
THE DANIEL JAMES GANG – "In This City/What Do You Want?"
This is the latest project from former CHINESE TELEPHONES guitarist Daniel James, hence the name of the band! Overall this is way more rock 'n' roll sounding than the poppier tones of CHINESE TELEPHONES, and that suits me just fine. It sort of reminds me of ACE FREHLEY's solo stuff at times, which is good and bad—good 'cuz the riffs rock, but bad because the vocals are kinda weak, especially on the slower song on the B-side… I'd like to hear more from these guys, but possibly with a different singer (sorry Daniel!). (ML)
(Affiliated Publishing Situation)

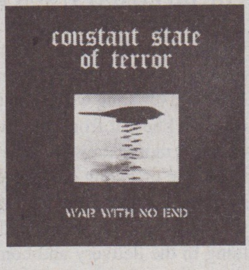
DEEP SLEEP – "Paranoid Futures" EP
The third EP from these Baltimore ragers has finally arrived, delivering guitar riffs in the SoCal hardcore tradition in the midst of melancholy melodic licks. This record picks up where the second EP left off, leaving more room for the melodic and deviating from the straightforward hardcore of their first EP. These six new songs cover similar themes of isolation and internal battles in a world gone mad and can sound slightly anthemic at times. I'm not as into this recording as I was the first release, but it's still a great record and I'm psyched to see this band putting so much energy into their music. (DA)
(Grave Mistake)

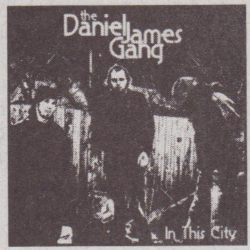
THE DEFORMED – "The Anarchy Years and Primitive Rituals" 2xCD
I'd never heard of THE DEFORMED before; apparently they were on *Bullshit Detector 2* (big whoop) and released a couple of singles in the early 1980s. It looks like they had that metally goth look à la BROKEN BONES going on. The music is pretty awful; it's no coincidence why some bands remain unheard of. The second disc looks like it documents their passage into the tribal, free festival scene...I think I'll leave that well alone. This CD is pretty depressing; it reminds me of shitty bands playing shitty gigs in shitty pubs with shitty PAs in shitty Britain in the shitty '80s. Anyway, I assume this double disc set collects all DEFORMED's shit. (AD)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

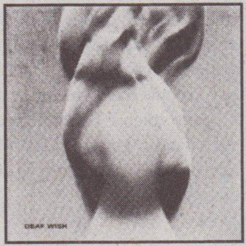
DEMON'S CLAWS – "Weird Ways/9000 Feets"
I dig these guys way more than their earlier incarnation, THE SCATRAG BOOSTERS. There's something more cohesive about this lot; lo-fi down-home countrified rock 'n' roll. It has elements of a way less polished REIGNING SOUND meets THE GUESS WHO at times, and this recording particularly sounds very "live." Not really sure how punk this is, but I'm old as fuck and couldn't give a fuck... I'm feelein' it. For the folks who dig their roots, this is the jam. (TB)
(Rob's House)

DESGUACE – "Yo Me Sé Cuidar" LP
This is exactly what I expected from the cover, which prominently displays a skeleton chugging a beer while flying through the streets in his coffin, dodging sandwiches, forks, shoes and... boobs? The lyrics are in Spanish, so I have no idea what they're









saying, but these dudes play fast hardcore punk and they keep it fairly interesting by introducing parts that aren't straight-up punk. I think I would like this better if the vocal melodies were less cheesy, because the music is pretty good and full of energy. The guitar is less distorted and more trashy than it might on your typical hardcore recording, but it sounds good and sometimes reminds me of bands like INSOMNIO, but slightly faster and not quite as catchy. Also, I would probably hate these dudes if I ever met them. (DA)
(Trabuc)

THE DIPLOMATS / SUN RARARA – split EP
You know the first time you hear something and you immediately think, "This is a great song"? Every time you play it for someone, she/he will think the same and the song will go on to be one of your all time, and you knew it from that first listen. Well, I had one of those moments with THE DIPLOMATS' "Gimme Hell," the first song on their side of this EP. The music is simplistic garage including a very primitive guitar solo, and the lyrics aren't that clever, but there is something in the delivery and composition that makes this one great song. The rest of the EP isn't that bad either. The other track from THE DIPLOMATS is almost as good with a more rockabilly tinge. SUN RARARA unfortunately seems disadvantaged by me listening to the other side first. Sorry, guys. SUN RARARA is dirtier, but still plays some catchy punky garage. They could easily be an undiscovered early-'80s band. Also included is a ten-song SUN RARARA CD and a DIPLOMATS DVD. Cool stuff. (CK)
(no address)

DIRTY BLVD – "Radio Dirty" CD
Italian punk rockers that aim for "dirty" with success. DIRTY BLVD is somewhere along the way of THE HUMPERS and THE STITCHES. Pretty rockin' in a drunk-punk way with good raw vocals. Nothing overwhelming, but they do get the job done. (RL)
(Area Pirata)

DODESKADEN / SPRÄNGD – split EP
DODESKADEN has a certain charm. They play direct, forward hardcore that is laced with distortion. The music is well recorded and the female and male vocals match really well. The lyrics are varied, but stay close to punk rock topics such as hating work and despair. I think that DODESKADEN could be really fun to see live and this recording is definitely a good start. SPRÄNGD plays a faster style of D-beat that has become synonymous with Sweden. The recording is really slick but still has a rough edge. They don't really challenge my ears with anything new, but then again they execute the style very well. I would compare them to countrymen FY FAN, except that FY FAN has way less metallic guitar. SPRÄNGD is very good at what they do and this record is definitely worth checking out. (WK)
(Unrest)

DOPAMINES – "Soap and Lampshades" EP
Yikes, man, this shit is super heavy on the power-pop. This record is straightforward Midwest basement pop punk. Think SCREECHING WEASEL worship with multiple male vocal harmonies. Heavy on the melodies, heavy on the pogo, heavy on the basement full of wasted 18-year-olds singing along to every song. I can see it now, man. THE DOPAMINES remind me of an over-the-top DELAY, like these guys are playing as fast and as melodic as they possibly can. (FS)
(Cold Feet)

DR. GREEN – "Culture Repair" CD
Ska-influenced stuff from Lithuania, with vocals in native tongue. DR. GREEN's songs range from ska to punk to world music. Nothing here really grabs me; this seems pretty tame. (RL)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

DRUNKDRIVER – "Knife Day/January 2nd"
So, I figure I should just come out and say it: I am extremely biased against anything from New York. I hold them to a higher standard and usually despise and ridicule anyone and everything I can when it comes to New York City and its population. It's all a front, though—I just hate the inflated ego. DRUNKDRIVER comes outta NYC with a unique and interesting sound. Initially, I wasn't into it—the songs are rockin' with some amped-up blues. This may sound weird because DRUNKDRIVER is more a noise/punk band, but, but there are moments not unlike some SABBATH tunes. They are barely able to keep things together on these two tracks, producing a loud and impressive jam-down for two instruments and some dude yelling. I still don't know how I feel about this record, but I know I don't *not* like it. The B-side track is what really keeps them in the game. The hype from their LP last year on Parts Unknown should have maybe tipped you off as to what these cats are up to. I stayed away and am still sorting this mess out. "January 2nd," huuhmmmm? (RM)
(Fan Death)

DSC – "We Are the Drug Store Cowboys" CD
This Arizona band has been around for ten years, but this is their first full-length release. Their sound is a mixture of more mainstream pop punk like PENNYWISE or NOFX, SoCal hardcore à la ALL, and ska. Only a few of the songs on this record add horn accompaniment to the backdrop of cheesy pop punk bass lines, while most are faster with typical driving punk beats. There is no lyric sheet, but I'm pretty sure most of these songs are about finding drugs to do. (DA)
(self-released)

DUM DUM TALK – "Hentikan Penindasan" CD
Here's a band from Malaysia that plays really positive punk that is pretty poppy, but actually manages to keep it interesting. The instruments are played with proficiency and the vocals are catchy. DUM DUM TALK has a lot of good things to say in the lyrics, which are translated into English. The songs are nice and short, too. I like the minute-and-a-half song. Kind of reminds me of UK pogo punk at times. Good job! (WK)
(Nervous)

EBONICS – "Rock 'n' Roll" EP
A faster, louder, snottier, *punker* kinda DEVIL DOGS vibe, more in look and feel than sound. The A-side launches into the appropriately titled "Rock 'n' Roll" and lays right into the follow-up "Partytime." Loud and blown-out, this five-piece makes ample use of their extra guitar muscle, laying down a thick blanket of rock 'n' roll action. The last song, "Hilter's Wife" stands out for being a short, punchy, surf-punkish masterpiece. Features members of TRADITIONAL FOOLS and LES HORMONES. Act quick— limited to 300. (IS)
(Daggerman)

THE ERUPTORS – "Microwave Massacre" CD
Boring and generic bar punk from England. Unoriginal songs with subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) egotistical and misogynistic undertones. 99% of the time if you write a theme song about how cool your band is, it is going to suck. And 100% when you write an instrumental song called "Whoregasm" it's going to suck too. Don't send us your next CD. (FS)
(Fixing a Hole)

EX HUMANS – "Chicane/Detector"
Guy from CARBONAS moves to New York and adapts his sound accordingly. Same whale, different size, but this one much smaller and with less gills or barnacles. What the fuck am I talking about? I thought FULL BREACH KICKS was an "e-store" (what a dick, huh?) that sold leather jackets and rainbow-colored BOYS t-shirts. Buy it if you really want to. (BB)
(Full Breach Kicks)

EXPLOSIVE INTENT – "Pretty Little World" CD
Rockabilly punk (but not psychobilly, mind you) with some decent hooks. EXPLOSIVE INTENT's songs are simple and straightforward as can be and sound a lot like they were recorded in a well, or a karaoke bar. (AA)
(Spine Punch)

EXTORTION / RUPTURE – split 5"
Man, do I love 5" records. Even though my record player at home won't play them at all (aaaarrrrggggh-hhh), they're such a ridiculously nerdy format that I can't help but love them. What makes a 5" even better is when the music on it is totally killer. For you poor fools out there who didn't catch them on their recent triumphant US tour with the almighty IRON LUNG, Australia's EXTORTION are one of the best fast hardcore/powerviolence/whatever bands out there today. They stuff three hate-filled, bile-spewing tracks onto their side of this record, all of them among their best material. Thrash and destroy. RUPTURE (or THE ORUPTURETANS as the cover states) contributes a single-track (posthumous, I believe) entitled "Vegetable Cunt Fun," on the joys of using produce as sex toys. While not as offensive as some of the songs on their *Soap Farm* EP, they still obviously thrive on hatred and controversy. This track is in their later, more straightforward punk style, as opposed to their earlier fastcore material. Still totally killer. Buy this now. Oh, a note for all of my fellow record nerds: the first press on black vinyl sold out almost instantly. This is the second (and I believe final) pressing, on clear orange. Neato. (VX)
(RSR)

FAITHLESS SAINTS – "Sweet Sacrilege" CD
These guys start out like ANTI-FLAG and end up like AGAINST ME! I guess there are worse bands to sound like. Pretty good stuff on this five-song disc. Political and a little loose. I enjoyed this. (RL)
(Irican)

THE FLIPS – "That Girl Stacey" EP
Being in a girl band that is very much a *girl* band is kind of "shticky." I get it. Really, I do. Still, I have a hard time not falling for this sort of shit most of the time. This is an excellent example of just that. Six chicks in this one, all playing up the sort of '60s beach look. And the songs are all very catchy in a '50s or '60s sort of way. Oh, and they're about the girl Stacey that stole her boyfriend and that sort of thing. I get it. It's just that I'm a sucker for this sort of thing. (KK)
(Bancroft)

FLYING OVER – "Are You a Punk" EP
All right! There is little-to-no info included about the band, but my money was saying they are French. And you know what? When I went to the label's web-

site, I was right! I hate to stereotype, but you know how some countries have a definite style for their punk/rock 'n' roll bands? Well, FLYING OVER fits right in to that "French" style in my humble opinion. I'm admittedly not a huge fan of many French punk bands, but I do like LES HATEPINKS, and if you like them, then you should probably check out FLYING OVER as well... (ML)
(Adrenalyn)

FLYIN' TRICHECOS – "Tri Tri Tricheco" EP
The perfect antidote to the sit-down, bullshit, quiet-time "folk punk" craphole nonsense that seems to be spreading like scabies through the garage punk scene these days. Leave it to Alessandro (of THE GRABBIES and many other lesser, but still ass-blistering bands), an Italian living in Cleveland no less, to try and set things right again. Hardhitting, fast and snotty, drug-fueled punk. The real fucking deal. The Johnny Ryan-esque cover art (cocaine-snorting flying walrus) seals the deal. (IS)
(Proud To Be Idiot / Distort)

FONTANA – "Not a Leg to Stand On/Miss Calhoun"
Detroit's on fire again. More messed-up shit from the forgotten state. Like the bastard sons of THE CLONE DEFECTS, these boys take garage punk and add a bunch of classic riffage. You know these guys are hunkered down listening to old CHUCK BERRY, BLACK FLAG, and STONES records in the Michigan mid-winters. The A-side goes from a FLAG jam into some '60s mellow pop...sounds like it wouldn't work?? Totally does. Standout shit from... (TB)
(Milk 'n' Herpes)

FREAKNATION – "7x3" 10"
Fast, fast hardcore from Spain. You know when there are twenty tracks on a 10" that they are likely to be short, fast, and loud. I like that FREAKNATION is fastcore without the retro clichés and they're fast enough to border on grindcore. I'm having a hard time placing the sound, but that's a good thing. They threw in a DISHARMONIC ORCHESTRA cover. Wow. This is one of those records I really like, but am having a hard time coming up with words to describe, although they have some similarities to HELLNATION... (MH)
(Khhapspmch)

THE FRESH & ONLYS – LP
First thing I thought was THE ROCK*A*TEENS, but that comparison doesn't really work. Then ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN. Somewhere in between, maybe. And then it launched into this dumb psychedelic hard rock guitar wankery. All the songs are pretty decent garage rock-esque, kind of psychedelic '60s pop whatevers, but they all seem to have at least one dumb part in them, whether it's a painfully long guitar solo, annoying chorus, or embarrassing lyrics. Not into it. (MM)
(Castle Face)

FRESH MEAT – "Leather Daddy" EP
Ugh, seriously, this sounds like a grunge record. Droney, repetitive, distortion-coming-from-somewhere style rock music. Not my bag! Not cool, not catchy, not interesting in any way. Not artsy, not innovative—boring! My girlfriend laughed at this shit. Come on, guys, pull it together an' gimme sumthing worth listening to! (RM)
(Fashionable Idiots)

FRIENDLY FIRE / TENEMENT – split EP
Here we have a split by one Midwest band and one East Coast band. TENEMENT, from Appleton, Wisconsin. is reminiscent of the poppier side of THE REPLACEMENTS. Hailing from Richmond, Virginia, FRIENDLY FIRE sounds very similar, with slightly more of a JAWBREAKER tinge to it. I wish this record had come with a lyric sheet or insert of some sort. Even when you can clearly hear all the vocals, it's nice to be able to follow along to get a better idea of what's going on. (BD)
(Forcefield)

FROM THE DEPTHS – "Germinate" CD
From ex-members of CATHARSIS and REQUIEM comes an interesting mix of heavy crusty hardcore and soaring melodies. The greatest differences from their previous bands' material is the increased sense of drama and tension in the music, and the lilting melodious singing (think ASSASSINATORS) that accompanies the usual rounds of gutteral screaming. Revolutionary lyrics in English y en Espanol, *tambien*. (AA)
(CrimethInc)

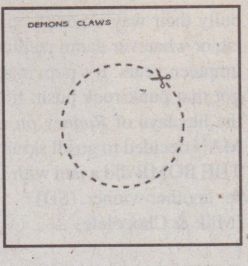
FULL OF FANCY – "Every Wall in the Parlor" EP
FULL OF FANCY comes to us with probably their best record thus far. That is if you only listen to the first side. Side A gives us two songs of RAMONES-style catchy punk rock with plenty of duel female vocal harmonies. Totally rockin! Much of FULL OF FANCY's earlier material was a bit heavy on the bubblegum side of pop punk—the kind of stuff that makes you think of sunshine and pizza parties. These songs are a bit grungier and dirtier. FULL OF FANCY has always been good, just saying that their previous records were more "I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend" RAMONES, whereas this record was more "Blitzkrieg Bop." That being said, side B is completely different; it's a slower song that has a RAINCOATS-with-heavy-distortion kind of feel. You can tell a lot of emotion is expressed, but to the unfamiliar listener the song falls a bit short of memorable. All together, a good EP though, for sure. (FS)
(Cold Feet)

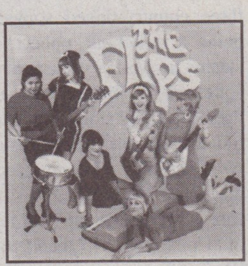
FY FAN – "Åh Nej" EP
Yes! A new EP from the current best band in Sweden. This time around, FY FAN recorded with the line-up that they had for last year's US tour: Jona on vocals, as opposed to Jonas, who sang on the first 7". No fancy bullshit. No pose. Just gnarly, ripping hardcore, played by real punks, the way it should be. Unrelenting power, constant forward drive, and the spirit that makes classic records "classic records" keep this band constantly in my mind. It's records like this that get my palms all sweaty and make it impossible to sit still. If this were the only record to come out this month, it would be a good month. (JU)
(Adult Crash)

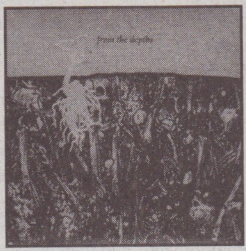
THE GENTLE ART OF CHOKIN' – "Mahlstrom" 12"
Fucking maniacs! This is a one-sided 12" with blistering speed, aggression, and all around what-just-happened...ness!! Super high energy that comes across in well-written and executed heavy and thrashing songs. Some of the guitar reminds me of BOTCH at times, but GENTLE ART OF CHOKIN' mostly sticks with a fastcore brutality thang. That said, these dudes switch gears seamlessly from apeshit no-escape to in-your-face thrash to badass heavy hooks, and then on to the killer breakdowns. A great sound executed to perfection. Each riff is held just long enough then jerked out and replaced by an equally impressive substitute. I bet they're fucking fantastic live. Sounds like a new Euro favorite—don't think this will be coming off the turntable anytime soon! (RM)
(RSR)

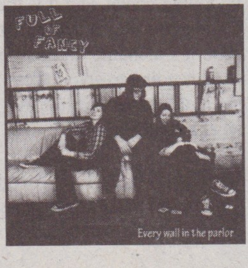
GET BENT – "Sleeping Bag" EP
Mid-tempo melodic punk from upstate NY that's really well played and has a great sound. Like WESTON meets HOT WATER MUSIC meets the ONION FLAVORED RINGS meets WESTON again. That's the guy from WESTON singing on track two, right? If not, it's a dead-ringer. This fucking kicks butt—I'm getting quite excited sitting here reviewing this. There's so few bands that I *really* like these days that I get quite a buzz from hearing...ah fuck, they already broke up. It's just my luck. Bastards... So I guess these four tracks are from a 2008 demo, and the band called it quits that December. Why can't *they* reform and tour instead of the fucking CRO MAGS? Oh, why do the good die young? (AD)
(Dead Broke/Dirt Cult)

THE GIRLS – "Transfer Station/Elephant Tricks"
I'm loving it—two tracks of new wave power-pop perfection. These two ditties will be stuck in your noggin for years; they'll









bully their way on every mix tape, CD, iTunes playlist, or whatever damn medium you choose for the next umpteen years. It's pop, make no mistake, but it's still got that punk rock push. It's like a lost treasure from the heydays of *Rodney on the ROQ*, or if AC NEWMAN decided to go all skinny tie, or if FRANCH HAS THE BOMB did a jam with THE CARS. Another cigar for another winner. (SD)
(Milk & Chocolate)

GOODNIGHT LOVING – "Up North Girl" EP
Wisconsin's GOODNIGHT LOVING delivers three country-tinged songs, with "Up North Girl" being a rollicking, upbeat, sing-along that I'm sure steams up Midwest basements in the winter. The two songs on the flipside take a melancholic stroll down the slow, folky side, complete with your haunting harmonica reminiscent of a distant train whistle. Outright wrist-slittingly depressing, actually. And they're songs that bring to mind the bitter cold of a Midwest fall, before winter really hits. I'll take the good times A-side of "Up North Girl," thank you. (IS)
(Bancroft)

HELLO BASTARDS – "Leave Their World Alone" EP
Self-proclaimed "Veganarchist Straightedge Hardcore Punk," HELLO BASTARDS plays relentlessly brutal hardcore (think DROPDEAD) with traded male / female vocals and thoughtful and provocative lyrics, and pair all that with striking aesthetics. This EP is a total rager, and I highly recommend you pick it up if you're vegan, anarchist, sXe, or none of the above. (AA)
(Never Healed)

HERPES – "Komm Vorbei" 12"
Some stupid "Warm Leatherette" synths pulsing creepily under taut yet jangley waver guitars, while PLASTIC BERTRAND the sequel croons perkily over it all. Get out your ironic gold chains and '80s secretary blouses and get ready for the dancefloor. They are from Berlin! Thus the singer's accent totally suits the sound… If the idea of perverted-sounding German new wave appeals, this record is for you! It's really danceable, the songs are catchy as fuck, it's a total art-school-girl party soundtrack!! Do you want new wave or do you want the truth? Don't misbehave in the new wave! (LG)
(Fin du Monde)

HEVN – "What Goes Around… Comes Around" EP
Six-song slab from this now-defunct Norwegian band. Fast and melodic, with guitars that remind me of their countrymen SO MUCH HATE and gruff female vocals that still maintain just enough singing to keep them from ever being monotonous. They mix tempos and rhythms often, going from more straightforward LA FRACTION-style charges to slower, guitar-heavy melodic bits, and then in songs like "Heartattack," they change tempos so much that the song is over before you knew how much you liked it (I listened again, just to double-check, and it is the best song on the record). I like these tracks better than the HEVN LP, so I suppose it's a shame that they've called it quits, but if a band is going to go out, they might as well do so on the strength of a record like this one. (WN)
(Sjakk Matt Platter)

DE HØJE HÆLE – "Rovguitar" EP
Ah, this record was pressed, not too long ago, in a limited run of some ridiculous number like 129 copies. Onto the music: track one is a completely amazing song, the type of tune that infects the mind to the point of sleep loss. It is honestly that fucking good. The other songs are sadly not as catchy or memorable. Rockin' punk in the vain of late-'70s Swedish punk, but this band is Danish. Cool record, brought back in print so that another 488 people may hear it. (MS)
(Repoman)

HODNE PODNE – "Tanecudna" CD
These punkers out of, I believe, Czechoslovakia play a kind of folk mixed with rock with electric instruments, while engineering a bit of a ska-punk feel to it. Lots of folk-type instruments are featured on this, including accordion, wooden flute, and horns, in addition to the usual electric guitar, bass, and drums. There is no English translation of the lyrics, so I have no idea what the songs are about, but "Trhejte Kopretiny" and "Azzabusim" were my favorites. If you like the ol' international folk-punk, you'll probably dig this. (RK)
(Papagajuv Hlasatel)

HOSTAGES OF AYATOLLAH – "AntHOAlogy" CD
Amazing anthology of one of my favorite German hardcore bands, complete with a DVD of fantastic live footage and music videos that are worth the price of admission alone. Coming at a time when studs and spikes were the trend, these kids took from bands like MDC, DEAD KENNEDYS, and DAG NASTY, spearheading German skate-core, which included SPERMBIRDS and SKEEZICKS. What makes HOSTAGES OF AYATOLLAH stand out is that they have a distinctly American sound, but with German lyrics. It sorta sounds like SPERMBIRDS with the guy from SLIME singing. Unlike a lot of retrospectives, this is totally listenable from front to back and has really stood the test of time. Great to see this out there!! (TB)
(X-Mist)

HOWIE AND THE HOTKNIVES – "Shut Up and Dance/Kids Are Kids"
Despite having one of the worst band names ever and, at times, a little too much guitar work for my taste, this one is going to get my recommendation. HOWIE AND THE HOTKNIVES is very catchy, almost in a RICHARD HELL sort of way. And I like the lo-fi thing they've got going on. This takes me right back to the rock 'n' roll / new wave / punk rock of the late '70s. One original and one DEAD MOON cover. This isn't HOWIE AND THE HOTKNIVES' first record, but I can't help but wonder if it still isn't too late for a name change. (KK)
(Felony Fidelity)

HUL – "Den Danske Ungdom" LP
Dear Reader, you are so lucky this reissue is seeing the light of day. Pre-AMDI PETERSENS ARME, YOUNG WASTENERS, and NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS, etc…and this is the *crème de la crème*. *Den Danske Ungdom* is an impeccable record—it's on my top-ten of post-Y2K records, and it's a desert island pick for sure. From the first drop of the needle, you're hit with a wave of fervid urgency and power, that first guitar lick forever etched into one's brain. The vocals are so pure and honest with such youthful vigor and abhorrence with every squeek and pre-pubescent crack being utter hardcore perfection. The songs so original/ memorable you'll want to flip this record over and over again until you've retained all its beauty; how often is the first record or output by a group of kids this accomplished? I'm writing all this now without having listened to it in over a week. It's just one of those records that is an instant classic, a true rarity in today's saturated heap of terrible to mediocre records. What I'm saying is this is a scorched earth policy. I'm putting it on now and am set to explode. *Pick your King* of a new generation? You bet. (RR)
(Hjernespind)

HUNX AND HIS PUNX – "Hey Rocky/Movin' On"
This is the third single from HUNX and I believe it to be the best thus far. Well, musically at least; the scratch and sniff on their other record was hilarious. This record picks up right where the last one left off, with some more queer '60s rock 'n' roll—we're talking a full on clap-track and lots of banging tambourine, all with strongly sexual lyrics delivered by a very nasally lead vocalist, Hunx (he's the guy on the front cover wearing nothing but a zebra print speedo). This record is oh so catchy and so good! Think of a gay SHANGRI-LAS with fuzzy guitars. This rules. (FS)
(Bubbledumb)

IL-62 – "Opuszczamy Babilon" CD
Long running Polish post-punk experimental group that takes cues from NEW MODEL ARMY, THE GUN CLUB, and KILLING JOKE. IL-62's songs are eclectic in their influences, but maintain a dark brooding atmosphere throughout. Bonus cover of DEZERTER's "Anarchista." If you like your shit weird and dark, check it out. (AA)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

INRI – "Demokracja" CD
Poland's INRI offers thirteen tracks of typically flavored Eastern European hardcore. The music is fast and melodic with passionate shouted and spoken vocals, the guitar has a lot of palm muting, pick slides, and such, the rhythm section is precise and the songs are well developed. The production is fairly slick and I'd say *Demokracja* a bit too polished at times, but overall INRI would find a nice home with any fan of Eastern bloc punk. (CI)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

INSANITY PREVAILS – "Killi Will" EP
It seems the bird of crust has flown south in Europe. What I mean to say is that almost every new band playing the crust style I hear these days has gone back to the well known thrashing DOOM inspired style of pre-TRAGEDY times. INSANITY PREVAILS plays really fast and precise crust with deep vocals and no melodic tendencies at all. Personally, I was pretty tired of the millennium crust thing, and all the bands similarities to bands that did it well such as TRAGEDY and REMAINS OF THE DAY. It's a welcome change this month to review some straight ahead crust thrashers. This is pretty awesome, great musicianship, good vocals, the only thing it is missing from a listen or two is that separating factor that the classics always seem to possess. Good record. (WK)
(Sjakk Matt Platter)

JESUS CRØST – "Jesus Crøst" CD
My expectations were low when this CD went into the player: guitar/drum duo, probably grind, with a silly cartoon cover of the two fellows standing in sweatsuits, and in the live photo on the back the drummer is wearing a wrestling mask. So imagine my surprise when I discovered that THIS FUCKING RULES!!!!! If two-man grind was always this good, I might even profess to like the genre (for the record, I fucking do not). Blazing speed, and that drummer can be as silly as he wants, he can play shows dressed as Grover from fucking *Sesame Street* if he can fucking play like

that. The guitars are so thick and tough sounding, and every song seems like it's going to fucking explode before they make it to the end. Just simply kills, that's all man, this just destroys me. JESUS CRØST is heavy as a Chrysler (the old ones, when they had metal bumpers and everything), the riffs are never boring, even when the dude is blasting (that's normally when the axemen don't bother to write riffs, you know?), and the drummer's parts are so fucking good that he's almost like the lead instrument. The intro to one of the songs is kinda dumb (it is grind, after all), but otherwise, this whole disc is sweet. And it's worth mentioning again that this shit is so fucking FAST…I am blown away. (WN)
(Bones Brigade)

JEUNESSE APATRIDE – "Black Block 'n' Roll/La Victoire Sommeille" LP

This record was described to me as sounding like LA FRACTION, but I really don't hear the similarities unless you count that they sing in French or that they are female fronted. I do like this record though! It is old sounding in a street punk style and the vocals are really great. It almost reminds me of NAMENLOS out of Germany. The music is very anthemic and the vocals are both guttural as well as harmonized. I like that their songs have a lot of drive and leave you humming the notes. Overall this LP is really great although really long. JEUNESSE APATRIDE reminds me of a lot of bands that came out of the early '80s European scene. Good stuff. (WK)
(Plastic Bomb)

JEUNESSE APATRIDE – "Larmes Aux Poings" LP

My first step in reviewing this is to get past the clearly professional nature of the band, which can be a bit of a turnoff in a sea of "DIY or die" releases that make me proud to be a punk on a monthly basis. But the music is pretty good, and the lyrics are way better than most, touching mostly on social ills and doing so in a thought provoking way. This recording is ready for the radio, but there are moments of the record that I really like; the times when the vocals offer an instant and favorable comparison to LA FRACTION (beyond the obvious female/French connection, she has the same sweet lilt from time to time, and it's beautiful), or "Equality," where the vocals and saxophone positively DEMAND that you listen to *Germ Free Adolescents* before your day is done, but about 1/3 of these tracks are thoroughly forgettable. Mid-tempo but leaning on the slow side, and they just plod on without offering anything exciting. The best part of the record is the three demo tracks stuck at the end. The sound quality is so much rougher that I'm surprised the band that made this super slick commercial LP would add something so punk, but it is really the only thing that interested me enough to write a review this long, because those demo tracks fucking RULE! Twice the speed of most anything on *Larmes Aux Poings*, and the vocals are so insistent and fucking punk, that sweet voice singing: "We are punks and skins / We are on the street / We are young and strong / Nothing stands in our way / Don't deal with us, cause you're going to pay / A boot right up your face, is going to make my day." I guess they were skinheads before they sang really deep songs about abused sex workers and "the dragon" of industry that chews up workers and the plight of the forgotten homeless? (WN)
(Plastic Bomb / Fire And Flames)

THE JONESES – "Criminal History Revisited" LP

The JONESES look like a cross between a bunch of Soho rent boys, POISON, and '80s TINA TURNER, luckily while their wardrobe is in serious question, their music ain't. A double LP of basically this mid-'80s LA band's entire catalogue. THE JONES played swaggering rock 'n' roll with a '70s New York vibe, but given that LA glam gloss over. It's got all the special ingredients that make this platter a winner, hooks, energy, and great tunes. If you dig THE DEAD BOYS, RAMONES, JOHNY THUNDERS, THE LEWD, and hosts of other similar sounding bands then you will total dig this. Yet again proving that you can't judge a book by its cover. Great. (SD)
(Full Breach Kicks)

KHATARINA – "Little Girls Never Say No" EP

The Finnish ladies of KHATARINA play raging and raw D-beat that is classically Scandi with dual vocals and buzzsaw guitars. The D-beat played on this EP is just as punishing as you would expect, but has the added bonus of escaping the usual trappings of haikus about war carnage, and instead gives us (in both English and Finnish) a fresh and relevant feminist perspective of both punk and the world. Rad. (AA)
(Campary / Deafforever)

KILLEUR CALCULATEUR – "Valley of the Dead" CD

Five songs of some pretty decent Malaysian post-punk, similar to the more groovy and jazzy side of FUGAZI. The guitar playing has a real MINUTEMEN feel to it. The music can come dangerously close to hipster dance rock, but never crosses the line. It still stays rockin' the whole way through. An okay EP if you dig angular upbeat post punk. (FS)
(Quiet Still Dead)

KLINIKA – "Karate Pogo" EP

I listened to this record twice whilst I poured over band history and information on the internerd, and now I am enjoying it for a third time while I write this review. KLINIKA hails from Wroclaw, dates back more than fifteen years (although only one member still remains from the first incarnation), and plays fast, very melodic and upbeat punk that is unmistakably Polish. The violin sets them apart, and creates a gypsy vibe that makes the ska parts seem more like something you would hear around a campfire than in a dancehall, but the lyrics and their delivery make this entire record for me. Poetic and serious, words about frustration and violence and helplessness that are so beautifully delivered that I wish even more than normal that I could sing along with Polish records. POST REGIMENT applies only as a vocal reference, though I think fans of one would likely enjoy the other. Do not expect blazing in-your-face hardcore, but instead a perfectly executed slab of well written and brilliantly played punk. There's even a SEDES cover, for true Eastern punk nerds. (WN)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

KLINIKA – "Tourdion" LP

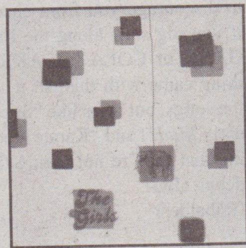
This record starts off with a soothing instrumental folk jam held down with impressive violin melodies, followed by a straight-up ska song with punk undertones. The guitar seems secondary on most of this record, usually keeping a typical staccatto ska strumming pattern behind more complicated violin parts and dynamic drumming styles that keep the songs from being too formulaic or boring. The band has got dual male/female vocals, all in Polish, but with political lyrics translated into English on the insert. The vocals are almost nasal and flat, but they provide a good balance to the intricacies of the music. This band does an intersting job of throwing traditional folk music into punk, but it's not quite my thing. If a wild mixture of folk, ska and throbbing fast punk sounds good to you, pick up this record. (DA)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

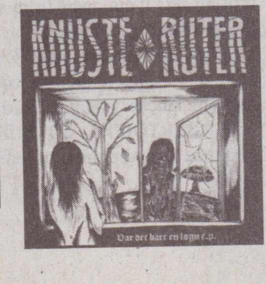
KNELT ROTE – "From Without" LP

Noisy, dirty, raw grindcore from Portland, OR. KNELT ROTE has a raw relentless sound that doesn't fall into grindcore clichés. They are noisy with some actual noise, somewhat like AGORAPHOBIC NOSEBLEED or early PIG DESTROYER. They lean more hardcore than metal, but there are metal moments like on the track "Tacit Sleep." This is some dark music and the lyrics seem to lean towards the sadness of existing in the world we live instead of an anarchist world, but some tracks seem to deal with sadness and depression independent of causes other than life. (MH)
(Celestial Gang)

KNUSTE RUTER – "Var Det Bare En Logn" EP

Fantastic six-song EP by KNUSTE RUTER ("Broken Windows"), who features members of great current Norwegian bands HEVN, SUMMON THE CROWS, and 2:20 but the sound is classic mid-to-late-'80s Norwegian Hardcore a la STENGTE DØRER or SO MUCH HATE. With similar signature moves such as swirl-





ing guitar leads and charging guitar lead ups to explosive hardcore bursts, hoarse shouted vocals all thrown over a churning, complex melodic core. Rather than a museum piece or re-enactment society, KNUSTE RUTER carries the lineage in superb fashion and even features an over the top fold out poster like the original X-port EPs. Killer! (KS)
(Sjakk Matt Plater)

KREMLOWSKIE KURANTY – "Zanim" CD
Diverse stuff from Poland with vocals in Polish. A little post punk, a little punk, and too much reverb for my tastes. Enough said. (RL)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

KVÆRN – "Mig" EP
Here we have yet another band riding the great Danish punk wave that's been sweeping across the world in the last few years, and just like most of the others, KVÆRN stands up to the hype. KVÆRN offers up their premier EP with a sound that falls somewhere between sloppy garage noise and raw traditional hardcore. Sounds perfect, right? Well, almost. While all six of the songs on this EP are catchy and good, the production seems a little bit muffled, but not enough to discourage you from checking this out, especially if you dig stuff along the lines of bands like PRESS GANG or COLA FREAKS. No lyric sheet or anything came with this, so it's hard to say much about the songs, but titles like "Superduperman" (taken from early *Mad?)* and "Karate Rock" sort of gives the feeling that they're not taking things too seriously. Cool debut. (BG)
(Rabalder)

LAPINPOLTHAJAT – "Kokoomus" EP
From what I can gather LAPINPOLTHAJAT formed in the Lapland region of Finland over ten years ago, but this is their first release. They play classic sounding Finnish hardcore in the vein of LAMA and APPENDIX. Now understand that I'd never throw those comparisons around lightly, but it's undeniable that LAPINPOLTHAJAT has the sound down. All the songs contain tense verses that build up into grandiose, sing-a-long choruses, guitar work that is bright and catchy, a bass sound that is raw and abusive, and to top it off the vocalist has heaps of charisma. These songs will sound awesome all year-round; they've got a dark and ugly undercurrent to compliment the bleakness of winter, but they also have enough hooks to be the soundtrack at your next summer BBQ. If you're a fan of the classic Finnish sound, or catchy hardcore in general, you must track down this 7". (CI)
(Hohnie / Roku / Heat Wave / Kamaset Levyt)

LAST LIGHTS – "No Past No Present No Future" CD
I'd never heard of these guys before, which seems surprising, since I'm guessing from the long list of bands that they thank that they've probably toured quite a bit. I really like their lyrics: "I call fascism: fascism / A world war for the cultured class." Well written, and not drowning in vague metaphors. I think the writing sets them apart from all the other bands playing in a similar style these days. LAST LIGHTS is not as constantly intense as CEREMONY (although they definitely follow in their footsteps a bit), and they have more melancholy, almost emo, parts than PRESSVRE or SABERTOOTH ZOMBIE; PAINT IT BLACK might be a good point of reference. This is pretty good. (VX)
(Think Fast!)

LAUDANUM / STORMCROW – split 12"
Oakland's STORMCROW returns with a new split 12". This time they're sharing the vinyl slab with friends LAUDANUM. As hoped for, STORMCROW churns out some super catchy riffs, reminiscent of classic bands like UNLEASHED, AUTOPSY, and MASTER. They also make room for plenty of doom and atmosphere. Brian's vocals have always fondly brought GRAVE to mind. I think their last outing with MASSGRAVE and their LP both captured a brighter sound (in terms of production), which I'm pretty sure I prefer. Nevertheless, the two tracks here totally rip. The LAUDANUM side is some brutal fin de siècle sludginess. Doom compositions that rely on carefully wielded noise as much as your standard bass, drum, guitar instrumentation. The production is killer, as are the vocals. It suits LAUDANUM's sound really well. There's this enveloping blanket of low end that totally crushes. LAUDANUM is like sludge/doom played with a *musique concrete* mentality. Exciting split. Nice packaging and layout. Totally recommended. (DB)
(20 Buck Spin)

LEATHERVEIN – LP
As a young punker, I scratched my head when I listened to later records by DISCHARGE, DIE KREUZEN, or THE FU'S. I thought to myself: Why would formerly great hardcore bands that clearly knew how to make good music put out such awful shit? After many years of blasting the same records through my stereo speakers and headphones day in and day out, I think I finally understand the motivation—there *are* other styles of music besides punk out there! However… that doesn't change the fact that most classic-era hardcore bands that "went metal" or "hard rock" were mediocre at best. Maybe it's the same reason why I'd rather listen to BLACK FLAG than ex-members of, like, AC/DC trying to do a punk band, that I'll put on a MOTÖRHEAD LP as opposed to some ex-hardcore dudes trying to play metal. Not to imply that people are locked into the style of music they played when they were teenagers; more like "project bands" can often come off as stiff or less sincere. Anyway, enough speculation from me and on to the real world circa Spring 2009: a band called LEATHERVEIN (formerly VIRGIN SUICIDE), made up of current and former members of DEATH TOKEN, HJERTESTOP, NIGHT FEVER, NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS, etc., releases their debut album. It's a mix of straightforward hardcore and—you guessed it—balls-to-the-wall R'n'R, replete with rockin' solos and ridiculous airbrushed cover art (that really deserves some description, but my review is too long as is). I don't doubt the motivations behind LEATHERVEIN are sincere (though not altogether serious) and I'm sure their shows are beer-soaked ragers, but listening to this LP here in front of the computer, all I could think of was "a poor-man's ANNIHILATION TIME." Maybe it would appeal to fans of that band? Or the people who bought the third INEPSY LP? Since I fall into neither of those two categories, I couldn't say. (CS)
(Hjernespind)

LEBAKKO – "Sunday Morning Coming Down" EP
After coming across a few records this month with minimal aesthetic effort, it's a pleasure to see this EP full of photos and lyrics to go along with the fantastic songs. LEBAKKO hails from Finland, but their musical leanings are more traditional fast punk with a light blend of melody and hardcore thrown in, instead of standard Finnish 'core. All the songs on this five-track debut EP are captivating and energetic, and the lyrics (in English) simultaneously fall between being serious and slightly retarded, ranging from having a broken heart to being fed up with dumb people and Christian stupidity. One of the tracks here reminds me of the KBD classic "Nazi School" by CRACKED ACTOR, but more raw, if that serves as a little musical reference. Try to track this one down if you can. (BG)
(Kanavakaupungin Levyt)

THE LEIF ERIKSSON / SOUTHPORT– split EP
I loved the SOUTHPORT record that came out eight or nine (can that be right?) years ago (the one with pictures of Neasden on it), and I'd long given up hope of ever hearing anything else by them…then this. SOUTHPORT features the other guy from SNUFF who doesn't play the drums (right?), and earlier SNUFF is pretty much the best reference point. The sound is beefed up with a bit of a HÜSKER DÜ-meets-mid-'80s Dischord sound, but regardless, these two tracks make me nostalgic for those long lost halcyon days of late-'80s UK melodic punk. I've never heard THE LEIF ERIKSSON before, but I think I bumped into them in a bar once. Anyway, they sound good, very much like what I just said about SOUTHPORT. Like MEGA CITY 4 or the SENSELESS THINGS with a little hair on their balls. (AD)
(Boss Tuneage)

LIBYANS – "Crash Course/Erased"
I don't know why, but I ignored this band until Dan played their LP on *MRR* radio… Now I am a fan. For some reason Liz's vocals remind me of Summer from FISTICUFFS BLUFF, but Liz is way tougher sounding. Maybe more like one of the girls from one of those mythologized East Bay punk bands or maybe THE CONVERSIONS. The music has hints of late '80s DC stuff—Jason Farrell-ish guitars, that sorta "rock" hardcore style that SWIZ took to its full conclusion. Which isn't to say these guys sound like SWIZ. They don't! But something about the guitar sound reminds me of that band and era. They are probably more *Damaged*-influenced… LIBYANS would have been my fave band when I was a teenager; something that brings to mind FISTICUFFS BLUFF *and* SWIZ??!! This record isn't quite as killer as the LP, though the B-side is great—totally jerky hardcore with FU vocals and smart lyrics. While the A-side, "Crash Course" starts out really compelling, it gets into this weird aforementioned East Bay punker sound I can't quite endorse wholeheartedly as I do the LP. I think they are maybe going for a classic West Coast punk sound like AVENGERS or BAGS however. Doesn't quite hit the mark. However, I can't wait to see them play live! (LG)
(Head Count / Too Circle / Shock to the System)

LIFE – "Warning" EP
This is a rare, and very welcome, new release from these long-running Tokyo crust stalwarts. There seems to be a sort of evolution going on in the Tokyo scene right now, and much as their contemporaries ABRAHAM CROSS have begun experimenting with psychedelia, LIFE have added some elements of '70s hard rock and proto metal (particularly in the soloing) to their usual stench-y crust style and it works. I mean, I love the earlier material, especially the flawless *The World Lies Across Them* LP, but this is a new and interesting direction for these guys and I'm all for it. I imagine a gig with LIFE and G.A.T.E.S. would be fucking devastating for both punx and metal heads. As usual, Black Water delivers the goods. (AU)
(Black Water)

LIPKICK – "Don't You Feel It?" EP

All-girl hardcore from Germany. Obviously I'm going to love it. And I do, except for the girl-on-girl hate going on in some of the lyrics. Not down with that. Remember the patriarchy. Other than that, I totally dig this record. It's dark and fast, sloppy hardcore created by a bunch of young German gals. The vocals are deep and yelled and are set against a fairly traditional formula for hardcore songs, with fast thrash parts here and there, followed by a couple of breakdowns, but the drumming is pretty unique and sets them apart from the lot of '80s hardcore revival bands these days. "Come, play, go, destroy!" Sick. Also the cover is a bunch of girls vomiting, which is clearly incredible. (DA)
(Kink)

THE LONERS – "Revolution" LP

OK, side A, song one and I'm thirty seconds into an acoustical number. What the fuck? What the fuck? It's Easter Sunday; this is not what I had in mind. Wait, it's over. Yes. But now they break into a real head-banging number, complete with what sounds like a double bass drum. Oh, and the song is called "The Devil in You." Perfect. Except that it sucks. I liked the acoustic bit better. Much better. I am not and have never been a fan of heavy metal. This is doing nothing to change my mind. Am I on *Candid Camera*? This sucks. (KK)
(Churchkey)

LORD BY FIRE – "Three Sisters of the Wolves" EP

Fffffffffuuuuuuuuuuuuuuuccccccccccccckkkkkkkkkkkk. When I got the note that came with this saying it featured members of FAÇADE BURNED BLACK, I got really, really excited. I was not disappointed. This is absolutely soul-crushing old-school doom in the stony vein of WARHORSE, CAVITY, or *Holy Mountain*-era SLEEP. The vocal style is more heavily influenced by crust than by BLACK SABBATH, but the bass is heavier than lead, the drums pummel and pulverize, and the guitar just wails. Anyone who listens to DYSTOPIA, SOURVEIN, or BUZZOV*EN needs to buy this now. (VX)
(Forcefield)

LOST BOYS – "Tuta Blue" EP

Straight outta France, this record has got a bit of a LA skate punk vibe to it mixed with a more modern hardcore sound. One thing that got to me is how the cover has a hand-drawn picture of a kid with a bunch of classic hardcore records that sound nothing like this band. This record is deceiving. Don't buy it. (PL)
(Trabuc)

LOS STEAKS – "Orange Fish" EP

This is an interesting one. "Interesting" doesn't typically translate into "good" for me, but this just might be an exception. Let's find out, together. Side one has got kind of a synthy, full sound in a very monotone sort of way. This really is almost an assault on the senses. Side two finds them picking up the pace a bit and it gets a lot more raw and rock 'n' roll-y, but it's still got that assault thing going on. And now that I'm done, I see that what I thought was side one was really side two. I wouldn't say that this sort of thing is typically up my alley, but this one hits the spot. Excellent. Really. (KK)
(Milk & Chocolate)

THE LOT LIZARDS – "Mums Fight" 10"

Yakisakana consistently delivers good, if not great records. The newest addition to the family, THE LOT LIZARDS, continues that tradition. They're not breaking any new ground here—you get a guy/girl two-piece playing utterly blown-out, simple garage (think NECESSARY EVILS or maybe BANTAM ROOSTER) that's heavy on distorted guitar and vocals, backed by the simplest of drumbeats. They throw in an organ on a few songs that mix things up, but the best songs are the ones where they stick to the basics. That said, the crush of noise on "Cynical Damage," the first song on side-B (yes, with organ) leaves me wanting more of that kind of punishment. (IS)
(Yakisakana)

M-40 – "Historiens Svarta Vingslag" LP

The great records just keep rolling in this month. Hailing from the crust capital of the world, Sweden's M-40 plays heavy, fast-paced political crust in the FROM ASHES RISE / SKITSYSTEM vein. It's nice to see a crust band with straightforward lyrics about specific topics, as many these days seem to meander into vagaries about war, famine, plague, etc., without ever really getting into it. Other than a couple in English, all of their songs are written in their native tongue, but with short and direct English explanations on hand for those of you whose Swedish is a bit rusty. They tackle such tried-and-true anarcho staples as the need to confront fascists on the streets, the horrors of everyday life outside the safety of middle class First World life, the danger posed by Christianity, and more. Not necessarily the most exciting fare for folks who have been around the activist block a few times, but definitely pissed off and to the point. Musically these guys have it down pat, occasionally slowing the pace down to a crawl only to blast back in with more whiplash-inducing metallic hardcore. I'd love to catch M-40 live; hopefully they'll make it over to the States some time soon. And for all of my comrades in record nerdery, the vinyl is black with a lovely pink/purple spray—definitely the nicest looking record I've received this time around. (VX)
(Halvfabrikat / Fight For Your Mind / Deviance / Headnoise / Dogma Destroyer / Hobo)

MANIC ATTRACTS – "Shut It/Teenage"

Super lo-fi abrasive stabbing punk with a nice early BLACK LIPS garage groove and HUNCHIES distorted drive. Buried beneath the noise is a driving melody and some great sing-along punch-in-the-air moments. Two tracks by these Canadian noise-mongers, who luckily for us can manage to pen a good tune underneath that beautiful dirge. Light me another cigar. (SD)
(Yakisakana)

MAPES / WORLD WAR IX – split EP

Let's start with the MAPES band photo, which says it all: keg cups, dorky outfits, and bare-breasted ladies with wrestling masks. The music is poppy bar rock about buttsex and whatever. It's the kind of joke that rings out across an awkward silence at a party, and only the drunkest shitbag laughs. Can you tell I'm bored? On to WORLD WAR IX, who also play rocking poppy punk rock. It's real catchy, and if this record were a wrestling match WORLD WAR IX would annihilate the MAPES, but as an easy victory, it might also be a hollow one. (AA)
(Red Black and Blue)

RD MAUZY – "Oppols Ond Bononos" EP

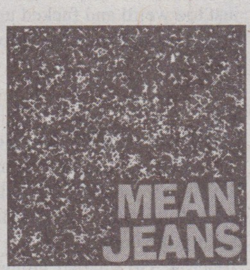
"Outsider" is typically horseshit vernacular for someone making the music that's inside their head. That said, this sounds like "outsider" music that falls somewhere in the alternative rock spectrum. I can appreciate that it sounds like this dude is making the music that's in his head, but that appreciation doesn't stretch too far because there's very little overlap between the music that he is making and the music that I want to hear. In the promo sheets, there were some WHITE STRIPES and NIRVANA references. This is better suited to alternative rock fans who want an alternative to their alternative rock than it is to me. (P$)
(self-released)

THE MAYFAIR SET – "Already Warm/Desert Fun"

Bad indie twee-pop version of BLANK DOGS. (MM)
(Captured Tracks)

THE MAYFAIR SET – "Already Warm/Desert Fun"

This is killer. From what I can pull together, this is a BLANK DOGS and DUM DUM GIRLS collabo. If those references leave you in familiar auditory territory, then you should be able to easily conjure what's up with this. Imagine each band at their best with interpenetration between the sounds. Killer lo-fi, dreamy, new wave pop. BRIAN WILSON probably wrote one of these songs (i.e. puts the BEACH BOYS inclinations of the WAVVES' records to shame). While I wasn't necessarily sure that the newest BLANK DOGS LP could change the game or make trees grow, I'm pretty



sure this can. No bullshit indie rock trappings, just a couple o' hits. Compulsory. (P$)
(Captured Tracks)

MEAN JEANS – "License 2 Chill" EP
So, from what I gather from the info sheet that Dirtnap sent along with this record, MEAN JEANS relocated to Portland from DC while adding a member. Who cares, judging by this record alone, these guys are great! This is made up of three songs of RAMONES-influenced pop punk, sounding a lot like THE LILLINGTONS. This got me to thinking—has Dirtnap released a bad record yet? I know have only heard a handful of the now 80 records they've done, but not a one has been less than memorable. (BD)
(Dirtnap)

THE MEASURE [SA] – "We've Upped Our Standards, Now Up Yours/The Five Chimes"
It's pretty much impossible to review THE MEASURE without mentioning DISCOUNT, although I like THE MEASURE a lot better—I never really dug DISCOUNT save for that BILLY BRAGG thing. THE MEASURE just has better songwriting abilities and an all-around fuller sound that falls somewhere in the barren ground between melodic punk and indie rock/pop. You would think that this would be an easy sound to pull off, but very, very few bands can do it…something about the politics and dynamics of the two demographics makes it so difficult for a band to please both camps. Some come close: THE MUFFS, SMOKING POPES, and more recently DIRT BIKE ANNIE, THE THERMALS, and LEMURIA, but I think THE MEASURE are the most likely to please the punk snobs… and they're very good. This record, the A-side in particular, is very strong and maybe the best thing I've heard from them thus far. (AD)
(Art of the Underground)

DAN MELCHOIR UND DAS MENACE – "Thank You Very Much" 2xLP
The ever-prolific MELCHOIR returns with this month's release. I'm sure a lot of you are familiar with the Brit ex-pat and his BROKE REVUE. This stuff is way darker and lo-fi, taking his CHILDISH influences out of the swampy garage world into an almost off-kilter DIY sound. Scattered throughout are some atmospheric acoustic numbers that temper the noisy experimentation of the other tracks. I know there are a bunch of heads here who will love this; it's just too weird and fucked up for me, and a double LP of it is enough to make my brains come out my ears… (TB)
(S-S)

MIDDLE AMERICA – "Scars" EP
Damaged hardcore from Allentown, PA. This is the eternal sound of twisted adolescent fury, growing up resentful and wrong, and somehow replicating that feeling in sound. There's a clear reverence for early Touch & Go gnarled guitars and yowled, anguished vocals. The title track "Scars" is an homage to Black Flag's "Damaged"; slowed-down, sludgy raw anger. No lyrics or band info—cult hardcore for the hardcore cultists? (LG)
(Fashionable Idiots)

MOHO – "Chotacabra" CD
Loud, down-tuned riffs galore that make for lots of headbanging. Sludge with a little doom and a tiny bit of stoner rock. It's not slow enough to be doom and not stoned enough to be stoner rock. The band is from Spain and has former and current members of LOOK FOR AN ANSWER and DISHAMMER. Every once in a while the music reminds me of BONGZILLA, but MOHO isn't all about pot. I also heard a little EYEHATEGOD. Good stuff. (MH)
(Alone)

MORAL DEMOLITION – "Live Noiz" 10"
Best known (if at all) for the super-rare split 7" they did with ZYKLOME A in 1983, MORAL DEMOLITION was a short-lived Dutch hardcore band. This 10" is a live set captured the same year the split was released. The music has a definite UKHC feel, with quite a bit of SUBHUMANS in the mix, but the shorter tunes lean more towards BGK. "Police State" (from the split 7") is a definite highlight, but "Red Riot" and "While U Listened" are standouts as well. Despite a little tape wobble here and there, the sound is actually pretty good overall. While this record is definitely not essential to the average punk fan, I'm glad that there are labels out there willing to preserve material like this for posterity. If you're into early '80s Euro HC, this is well worth tracking down. (AU) (Arg!)

MOSQUITO BANDITO – "Hello from Haiti" EP
Noisy and messy. Primitive stomps, plucky guitar strums, and country-ish yelps buried under a layer of distortion. If you like your rock loud, your blues trashed, and your punk out of control, this is a record for you. (CK)
(Milk 'n' Herpes)

MOTIVATION / SECOND COMBAT – split CD
The art for this CD features a monkey, a rhino, a rabbit, a bird, a lion, a deer and an ox X'ed up, dressed in youth crew gear (shorts, hoodies with Xs on them, varsity jackets) and playing hardcore. Awesome. That, along with the message on the back of the CD stating that it is "dedicated to the straightedge and vegetarian lifestyle," really sets the stage for the music. SECOND COMBAT has been around for years now, and they have definitely perfected their energetic, circle-pitting, sing-along-friendly sXe hardcore. And check out some of the lyrics: "I was sitting on the bench when the officer comes / To arrest me and my friends because of having a good time / Were come for the music and give it a chance / Not waiting for the businessmen to tear us apart / Assuming were metal and were drink a goat blood / The kids were clean with no drugs and drinking at all." Fucking A-plus. MOTIVATION was unfamiliar to me before this, but I'll definitely keep an eye on them from now on. They also play sXe hardcore in the youth crew vein, but faster and less melodic than SECOND COMBAT, just in-your-face hardcore energy. I highly recommend checking out both bands on this rad split. (VX)
(United X Front)

THE MUSLIMS – LP
Oh boy, oh boy, oh boy, oh boy, this is good. One track in and have already cranked the volume to serious tinnitus levels—ugly and deaf? My chances of finding a bride are looking good. It's got that angular post-punk vibe without getting too sharp 'round the edges, a nice C86 indie feel without being too cute, and a load of that special punk rock energy. THE CLEAN comes straight to mind, with a touch of WIRE and a splattering of EDDIE CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING and JONATHAN RICHMAN. Apparently these cats have broke big in soggy ol' England. With tunes of this quality, it's only a matter of time before they start raking in the yank dollar. Top of the bloody pops. (SD)
(1928)

MYDOLLS – "A World of Her Own" 2xCD
I seriously cannot believe that there are two CDs' worth of MYDOLLS material! The only song I had heard by them prior to now was their track on the defining TX punk comp *Cottage Cheese From the Lips of Death*. Now I feel like a loser for not investigating their extensive discography beyond that one song! This is a great package with awesome liner notes that read like an interview, including info on how they formed and their band adventures from backstage at THE RAINCOATS to motel room murders! It contains their first two 7"s, some demos from different eras of the band, a bunch of live sets, and their 12". It's cool listening to bands like this and hearing how far THE SLITS and RAINCOATS reverberated into girls' worlds back then, in the same way MINOR THREAT did for guys (and girls of course). So rad—how many other secret-to-me girl bands exist out there from this era?? Parts of this are super post-punk, reminding me somewhat of CHALK CIRCLE from DC; herky jerky like the DELTA 5 but filtered through US punk. It also reminds me of SIOUXIE in some way, with the swooping dark singing style. They seem get more new wave with the 12", but new wave through the RAINCOATS/ *Odyshape* lens if that makes sense… Some of the songs on it remind me of CRASS though! Especially the live ones. The lyrics are really thoughtful, provocative and feminist, targeting apathy, gender, the American myth, war, and religion. Anyway, this is totally worth picking up if you have any interest in early girl punk. The Austin punk scene in this era is really untouchable… (LG)
(Grand Theft Audio)

NAKED AGGRESSION / DIE SCHWARZEN SCHAFE – split 12"
Four new tracks from the now Los Angeles-based NAKED AGGRESSION find them sounding considerably beefier and more technical with their relocation and line-up changes since they reformed in 2003. Singer Kristin might be the only original member at this point from their early '90s Wisconsin origin, but they still retain their sing-song melodic attack and blunt "smash the state" political lyrics, and her vocals sound as great as ever. On the flip, the four tracks from Germany's DIE SCHWARZEN SCHAFE mix a bit of the pro-club-mix sound with snarling Deutsch punk. Around since 1985, they're masters of the style with excellent songwriting, but I wish the songs were delivered with a bit more urgency as they drag slightly. A bit more upbeat tempo would more closely hammer the point home. Features personal and political lyrics sung in German. A well balanced, solid split where both bands complement each other well. (KS)
(Campary)

NAKED ON THE VAGUE – "Chitty Chat/Goodbye Dear Cliché"
Kind of noise-y, pretty spooky, all sounds are like feeling through a dim deserted house, you know what I mean? Like ghosts. Now I'm even sadder that I managed to miss them all three times they played around here. A lot of it is slow and drone-ish but not exactly like drone at all. "Chitty Chat" starts out all creep-time with moaning/mumbling gibberish and random organ and guitars spidering through, and then it busts out into a rave up that's somewhere between CHROMATICS and HUGGY BEAR, but really more CHROMATICS. The second side stays quiet and weird through the whole thing, sounding like the soundtrack of an abandoned carnival right before dawn. Way good. (MM)
(Sacred Bones)

NECKTIES – "Skating with a Boner" EP

Compassionate, intelligent, and poignant words of wisdom found on this record will leave the listener pondering the philosophical inquiries that have confounded humanity for millennia. Yeah, right! If you can't tell by the title of this thing, the NECKTIES offer up another slab of idiotic, drunken skatecore to file away between your copies of THE IMPOSTERS or A.N.S. records. I'd call this a poor man's AGRESSION, since that's sort of what it sounds like to me, and the songs include such topical issues as "Salsa and Chips," "Shitty Surf" and er…skating with a boner. Bruce Roehrs says there can never be enough of this kind of punk, and he's not a man you want to disagree with! (BG)
(Secret)

NEPTUNES FOLLY – LP

Ugh. NEPTUNES FOLLY is one of many bands that are sure to surface in the wake of JAY REATARD's influence on music. These songs are about as diluted and lackluster as it gets; they're somewhere between circus and garage rock, which is a pretty terrible combo. *Arhaioghoid*! I have to wash my ears out now… (CI)
(Milk & Chocolate)

THE NERVE SCHEME – CD

There are a multitude of things wrong with this release. I got mystified trying to figure out which musical crisis to tackle first. Like if THE MIDNIGHT EVILS and SHARKPANTS were coupling cousins and birthed a developmentally delayed baby that was weaned on horror-punk lyrics. Pretty generic and poorly orchestrated melodic rock 'n' roll hardcore. (P$)
(Jailhouse)

NICE FACE – "Mnemonic Device/Situation Is Facing Utter Annihilation"

NICE FACE is another one of those one-man-band projects. I've not heard any of their/his previous singles or cassettes, but this one at least is pretty good. Minimalist by necessity but drenched in atmosphere (or is that reverb?) with catchy '80s new wave hooks. A bit like GARY NUMAN recorded on a dansette. (AM)
(Sacred Bones)

NON PROFIT – "Rage and Bitterness" CD

A debut fifteen-track CD by Polish punks living in London, mixing throttling fast thrash (think 625 Records) and a rapid-fire snare drum attack with downbeat bridges and the kind of chanting, anthemic choruses you expect of Polish hardcore. The delivery and junctures of these two tempos are often a little off and less than seamless, but like the best Polish hardcore you can't fault the willingness to be experimental within the confines of straightahead, vaguely mid-to-late-'80s-ish hardcore punk (where weird twists and turns were regularly combined with thrash blasting; think everything from RAPED TEENAGERS to TH' INBRED). Harsh, guttural vocals in Polish, a driving yet a little too prominent in the mix drum attack, dingy guitar buzzing, and the unpredictability keep your attention. Cool! (KS)
(Nikt Nikt Nie Wie)

THE NO SIN – "According to Death and Candy" CD

Late-'90s alt-rock. You know, elements of country but still driving rock and roll, kind of dumbly dramatic. Like COLLECTIVE SOUL or STONE TEMPLE PILOTS sped up a bunch if they were trying to be a SoCal punk band and had a girl lead singer. Why? Just... why? (MM)
(self-released)

NO TALK – "Confusion/Outside World"

Houston's NO TALK channels early punk/proto-HC attitude on their, what—third single? Fourth? Haven't really been keepin' track. The A-side is a total *Damaged*-era FLAG exercise in social misanthropy; the flip is a bit more up-tempo and punkier. Vocals are delivered in a throaty baritone. I'd say these guys do a good job of capturing the dark 'n' heavy mood of those forgotten US bands that were comprised of a bunch of gleefully destructive small-town misfits who picked up on punk a few years after the trend rose and fell in NYC, London, and Los Angeles. Not rewriting the book, but… if you're OK with that, keep your eyes peeled 'cause of course this is one of those limited-press deals. (CS)
(Spild Af Vinyl)

NOTHING PEOPLE – "Late Night" LP

I don't understand the hullabaloo over NOTHING PEOPLE. I think they're boring and sound like they are trying too hard. I *still* don't like them; this just brings in more kind of space jams and art school wankery with dumb lyrics. They are like a more boring, more rock and roll version of TWIN CRYSTALS. Am I done yet? (MM)
(S-S)

ODSZUKAĆ LISTOPAD – "Odszukać Listopad" CD

This Eastern European band plays melodramatic quiet-part/loud-part screamo. If the CD wasn't at least four years old, I'd at least make an effort to give an objective description, but it's not even their most recent album so F it. This entire subgenre of hardcore needs to die, and I'm *so* glad I don't have to sit through bands like this at shows here anymore. The musical equivalent of eating styrofoam. (CS)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

ODSZUKAĆ LISTOPAD – "The Masque of Slight Discretion" CD

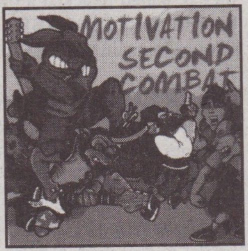
Commercial "hardcore" from Poland. Snarled vocals full of "anguish" followed by very sensitive singing, then right back to the metallic riffs and the mosh-metal breakdowns before bringing back the emotional bits again. This brand of music sucks and most often has nothing whatsoever to do with punk, but even in that realm, this disc is trite and uninspired. (WN)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

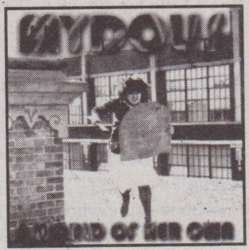
THEE OH SEES – "Help" CD

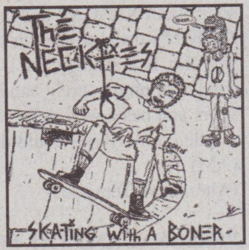
Having seen THEE OH SEES in all of their incarnations (OCS, the OH SEES, etc.), I have always been interested in and/or entertained by what I have heard. Each album has had a few songs on it that I enjoyed immensely. Their latest, *Help*, therefore comes as no surprise, but it is a revelation for me since every song on it is great. The band has found their groove. Shoegazer garage rock in a 13TH FLOOR ELEVATORS meet JESUS AND MARY CHAIN mode, albeit with a much more original sound than that seemingly easy assessment would make you believe. This is psychedelic rock with pop hooks and great male-female vocal harmonies. Of all the John Dwyer-fronted bands I've seen over the last many years, COACHWHIPS have remained my favorite. But now that I have heard *Help* I may change that to this line-up of THEE OH SEES. This is a fabulous record. (CK)
(In the Red)

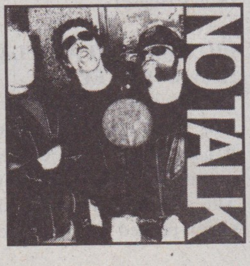
OI POLLOI – "In Defense of Our Earth" LP

In Defense of Our Earth is such a classic that I think the general vision of peace punk/anarcho punk is more shaped by this record than any other—for all its silliness and profound moments. The music is primarily a vehicle for an intense message of preserving the wildness of the earth and ending our interference and destruction of natural systems. In some cases the music is so subordinate to the message that the lyrics are basically a list of statistics or a thesis read without pause or cadence over an instrumental piece, forging a style imitated by countless others. In the scope of anarcho punk, they are most musically close to bands like CONFLICT or CRESS, whose music is martial and guitar-based. They have continued playing to the current day, and are as passionately engaged as ever, which only strengthens the weight of this reissue. It's easy in the face of utter devastation and disillusionment to take OI POLLOI's hopeful songs that value community, eating together, and the liberation of animals, and laugh at it. But the utter sincerity and purity of the message tends to get under your skin after enough listens—even if, like me, you delight in amusing your friends by saying, "Man and whale, walking hand in hand" in your best Scottish accent. (AA)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)









ONNA – "Cortigiana Dal Velo/Mune O Tsutsunde"

Sounds like creepy French cold wave, but without the effeminate French trappings. (Actually, I pretty much just said "cold wave" because it has a minimalistic drum machine pattern and I wanted to drop a "buzz word" to sound "cool," but if you hear it you'll probably see what I'm talking about.) Slow and kind of annoying, but it was recorded by the guy from THE STALIN, and it's growing on me I guess. I read a review calling this a milestone in Japanese psych, but I'm pretty sure nothing can beat out the time one of the guys from LAS REZEILLES NUDES or whatever they're called hijacked a plane and flew that son of a bitch to North Korea. (BB)
(Holy Mountain)

OSKAR KON K – "Destruye Los Canones" CD

Positive political punk from Spain. OSKAR KON K comes from the raw, basic school of punk. The vocals want to be sing-along, but often hit really bad notes. The songs are kind of boring, typical punky style—they kind of remind me of the archetypal high school punk sound. I'd say OSKAR KON K has the right intentions, but the music lacks the power and creativity that makes a band memorable and interesting. It's a little bit too poppy and quirky for me, so if you prefer inept, political pop punk OSKAR KON K might be worth checking out. (CI)
(Grita o Muere / Intelectual Punx / Difusion Anarcopunx / El Brot / Agitacion Social)

PANSY DIVISION – "Average Men/Coming Clean"

I'm not sure whose idea it was to have Jello Biafra sing on the A-side of this record, but it wasn't a great one. If you've heard basically any of Jello's collaborations over the years, you get the idea. "Average Men" is some pretty average rock backing a fairly pedestrian song about NASCAR dudes, even lacking PANSY DIVISION's usual tongue-in-buttcheek sense of humor. The flip is a straight [sic] cover of a GREEN DAY song. I'm pretty sure a band that's been around for 20 years and has a well-deserved reputation for funny (if a little corny) lyrics could do a lot better than this 7". (AM)
(Alternative Tentacles)

PERSONAL AND THE PIZZAS / BOBBY UBANGI – split EP

Now, everyone knows how much I like PERSONAL AND THE PIZZAS, but I have to say it: It is so very disappointing that one of their two songs on this, "I Don't Feel So Happy Now," was also on their debut EP. I know they have a couple more records in the works, but geesh. I kind of feel ripped off. Both PIZZAS songs are ballads that seem to over-emphasize these Jersey boys' RAMONES-esque style. They are sweet and nice, but PERSONAL is obviously channeling Joey Ramone singing "I Want You Around." BOBBY UBANGI plays two jangly acoustic tunes. Catchy and sweet as well, but way too mellow for me. I'd think that if you name yourself BOBBY UBANGI you'd at least be somewhat aggressive. (CK)
(Rob's House)

PIG HEART TRANSPLANT – "Hope You Enjoy Heaven" LP + EP

This definitely wins my prestigious, much-coveted "Most Awesome Packaging of the Issue Award." It has a huge fold-out sleeve on heavy cardstock, screen-printed in sliver, gray, and black on both sides with amazing art, plus a bonus 7" in a black sleeve, screen-printed with metallic silver ink. Really, really well done. PIG HEART TRANSPLANT is primarily the project of Jon Kortland, who makes up one-half of IRON LUNG. His collaborators on the LP portion of this release include Greg Wilkinson (LAUDANUM, LANA DAGALES, BRAINOIL, LIDTOKER, I WILL KILL YOU FUCKER), Jensen Ward (the other half of IRON LUNG, GEHENNA, ARTIMUS PYLE) and Chris Dodge (SPAZZ, LACK OF INTEREST, BACTERIA CULT). The LP is an odd mixture of noise and powerviolence elements, with vocals and instrumentation and even some song structure, mixed with ambient noise and unsettling elements of repetition and drone. The 7" is more straight noise in the vein of TENDER LOVE or JOSHUA NORTON CABAL—definitely the soundscapes of a sick mind. If you're into BASTARD NOISE, MERZBOW, MUSLIMGAUZE, or just generally weird, disturbing shit, then seek this out. (VX)
(What We Do is Secret)

PINK LINCOLNS – "Back from the Pink Room" CD

Ah, the classic first PINK LINCOLNS album, now reissued for the third time (making it put out by four different labels now). Maybe it'll stick around for a while this time. Hopefully this isn't yet another *special limited edition* release like every fucking record label on earth is doing right now, 'cause this album totally shreds. It's a total classic and deserves to be readily available to everyone at all times. These guys were one of the best bands to come out of Florida in the late '80s and this album is the first thing to pick up if you're not familiar with them (or only know of them as that band that did a split with SCREECHING WEASEL way back when). I'm trying to think of how to describe them to someone that has never heard of them, and I'm coming up blank. I can say though that I love these guys for the same reason I love STIFF LITTLE FINGERS: they play super fast snotty punk rock that can be poppy at times. But they are not a pop punk band at all. Well, maybe a little bit, but they were doing it *waaaaaay* before it was annoying. This is required listening for everyone. (FS)
(Jailhouse)

PINK REASON – "Borrowed Time" EP

I have three copies of this record for a reason, and it's a good one. (BB)
(Fashionable Idiots)

PLASTIC INVADERS – "Greatest Hits" CD

I listened to this entire album while packing some boxes around my house and I still have a hard time trying to pinpoint the sound for this review. Well, let me give it a try by first saying this is pretty tight and catchy French garage punk with sort of a science fiction influence thrown in. And that's only the beginning of it. These cats obviously have spent years rockin' out to everything from THE CRAMPS to THE GUARANTEED UGLY to ELVIS PRESLEY. But there's also a heavy proto-punk guitar presence moving along with the keyboards that conjures up the spirits of Ron Asheton and Fred "Sonic" Smith. This is the debut album by this band, in spite of the title, but you can tell these boys ain't amateur newcomers on the scene because they can play! (BG)
(Nova Express)

PLEXI 3 – "Timebox/What Love Is For"

There is an annoying manifesto-type of thing on the back of the cover of this EP that is way too cerebral for me to understand or even care about! All that really matters to me is whether or not the songs are good and not some self-absorbed diatribe to show off how smart you are. So to the matter at hand… Do these songs rock? Yes and no. The A-side is an uninteresting and plodding song that is the musical equivalent to what was written on the back of the cover—too many "clever" little tricks are employed to show off, but ultimately fall flat. The B-side on the other hand is catchy as hell! It's a relatively straightforward pop song that, self-admittedly by the band, sounds like THE MONKEES. No problem with that in my opinion and I'd rather listen to cliché rock 'n' roll or pop songs any day! (ML)
(Full Breach Kicks)

POISON ARROWS – "Sticky Situations" EP

This is fantastic! POISON ARROWS perfectly creates the catchy power-pop sound perfected by the likes of THE BOYS, FAST CARS, and early CHEAP TRICK. The three songs on this EP continue in that fine tradition of mixing rock and roll harmonies with a punk attitude and a hint of glam. I've listened to this several times and I want more! Looks like they're currently touring with EDDY & THE HOT RODS, which could also be chalked up as an influence. I couldn't imagine you not digging this, unless you don't like boss tight jeans and leather jacket rock and roll, in which case you should go jump off a bridge. Now! (BG)
(Full Breach Kicks)

PROTESTANT – "Antagonist" EP

They keep getting better. Last year's *The Hate, The Hollow* LP was pretty bad-ass, but these three tracks should place PROTESTANT amongst the best melodic crust bands going today. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that their songwriting is totally original—there are no obligatory TRAGEDY guitar leads, there are no by-the-numbers WOLFBRIGADE melodies, and while there might be an occasional (and slight) nod to '90s Midwestern screamo from the guitars, it is set to absolutely pummeling crust, and the delivery is all PROTESTANT. The drums are full of fills and stops that come out of nowhere but always make sense, and the vocals are a touch less growled this time around, almost (dare I say?) intelligible, and it makes the songs more manic and removes a lot of the metal that often bogs down heavy bands. Additionally, the lyrics are bleak and well written, and the artwork/packaging is superb. This record kills. (WN)
(Halo of Flies / Blindead)

PSYCHED TO DIE – "Sterile Walls" EP

Grave Mistake is cornering the market on rehashed '80s hardcore in the noughties the way 625 did with powerviolence and bandana thrash in the '90s, but this record is by no means cookie-cutter. PSYCHED TO DIE contains a member of THE ERGS but they don't carry over any of that band's sound. Good, raw, USHC that switches from mid-paced to blistering at the drop of a hat. There's a definite SNFU flavor to the riffs and structures and in the way that the vocals are probably the band's standout feature. Dashes of melody and the occasional guitar lead keep things interesting. I'm also reminded of THE SPERMBIRDS in places. They have a nervous, jerky energy that they manage to maintain across seven songs on this EP, which is no mean feat. Good stuff. (AM)
(Grave Mistake)

PYGMYLUSH / TURBO SLUT – split LP

PYGMYLUSH is a strange mix of ripping post hardcore and quiet sorrowful acoustic sounds that are haunting, and seem more apt in a Sofia Coppola soundtrack than here on this record. I'm not saying I'm

not down, just having a hard time reconciling the two diverging styles I'm being offered. With ex-members of PG.99 and CITY OF CATERPILLAR, the hardcore is not a surprise, but the dark quiet of the slow songs is. Multiple personality disorder. The ladies of TURBOSLUT fill their side with heavy, sludged-out grunge that steals the show. It's the best of what FLIPPER's dark, slow, heavy anti-music inspired. Too bad they just broke up! How can you release an insta-classic like this and then call it quits? So unfair. I vote for a zombie reunion. (AA)
(Exotic Fever)

RAMONES / UNDERTONES – "Punk Rock Slide!" split 2xLP
Although a gazillion RAMONES bootlegs are taking up record shelves—often in the form of crappy sound quality recordings of live shows—*Punk Rock Slide* falls under the rare "worth having" category. Three sides of this two-record release belong to the boys from Queens in the form of a 29-track live set recorded during an Indianapolis show in 1978. All the songs you would expect from the era are here, of course, but the decent soundboard quality makes it an essential artifact. The fourth side is a more rare treat that features seven UNDERTONES songs recorded for a German TV broadcast in 1982. Most of the set hails from their wonderful second LP *Hypnotised*, and the sound quality is rather good. This is a recommended release, but make sure you don't already have it because this boot originally came out in 1985. (BG)
(bootleg)

RANDOM CONFLICT – "Invisible City" CD
With a name like RANDOM CONFLICT I was not expecting much from this disc. I associate names like that with chaos punx, leather, anarchy symbols, and studs, which is all fine and great except this CD didn't appear to fit in that box. The album has artwork that calls to mind PENNYWISE more than the UK SUBS, and I was a bit confused and not too excited to review this record. Yet after I tossed the CD on I'm hit with some solid punk fucking rock from Huntsville, Alabama's twenty-plus year piss punks! Straightforward and fast; these last couple decades in the scene provided a welcomed competence and appeal to their songwriting. RANDOM CONFLICT are not breaking new ground with this offering, but definitely humbled my pre-judgments and set me up with a no-frills, fist pumpin' record. (RM)
(self-released)

DUNCAN REDMONDS – "Bubble and Squeak: Collaborations 2004-2008" 2xLP
Very cool concept here: ex-drummer from SNUFF (and a bunch of other bands) gives some riffs, songs, or just ideas to friends, then records with them when he can in studios, bedrooms, and basements. This idea could be total shit if your friends weren't people like Frankie Stubbs (from LEATHERFACE), HARD SKIN, and NOMEANSNO!!! Most of this is pretty raw-sounding demo recordings, but it only adds to the charm. The songs are all great and are varied, but with that classic SNUFF drum sound. One of my favorite tracks is "I Got the Fear" with Ian and Lee from VISONS OF CHANGE and DEPRAVED who I loved and didn't even know were still making music. There's so much to listen to (it's a double) and it's all good! Nice one, Aston and Boss T!! And thanks for the reviewer's copy…I'm stoked! Buy, buy, buy!!! (TB)
(Boss Tuneage)

REPORTS – "Bill Wyman Metal Detector/Attleboro Trailers"
Verse–chorus–verse lo-fi distorted rock from Cambridge, with catchy bass lines. 'Nuff said. (MU)
(Ride the Snake)

REVILERS – "Isolation" EP
You fucking skins and punks are in luck! These rough-hewn fucks have delivered the best 7" since *Mindless Contentment* by the PLUGZ. With Sato on vocals and guitar, Dr. Hands on bass, Hurricane Dave on drums, and J-Had on guitars, this REVILERS punk rock has a nasty Oi skinhead feel to it! The title song on side A, "Isolation," has a menacing danger zone to it. These Boston-area fucks have carried on the unhealthy Massachusetts skinhead/punk tradition. The *Isolation* EP continues the saga of Boston bands that have come to destroy your paltry little cow-towns like Providence, Philadelphia, New York, and Washington, DC. This is hard to digest for your average college fucks. (BR)
(Patac)

RISE UP HOWLIN' WEREWOLF – "Escape from Kool-Aid Island" LP
These guys pull in lots of different influences—grunge, Southern rock, soul, post-punk, and the list goes on—to create a fairly unique sound. Maybe like a cross between DINOSAUR JR, SUICIDE, and THE MC5? This is a pretty damn good record, especially if you are into checking out different styles that somehow come together and fall under the punk umbrella. (BD)
(self-released)

ROMANTIC ROBOTS – "Romantic Side/Robotic Side"
I would guess that the "Robotic" part of the name is owing to speed manipulation to make the recordings sound like TEENGENERATE meets THE CHIPMUNKS (if this is supposed to be played at 45 RPM) or ARMITAGE SHANKS meets BLACK SABBATH (if it's supposed to be played at 33), except that the other ROMANTIC ROBOTS EP that came in this month sounds (at 45) as though it was mastered at the same speed at which it was recorded. Maybe it's a one-off experiment, maybe somebody goofed (I'll guess the latter, as one of the five songs seems too bass-heavy for grooves so thin, causing the needle to jump on the review turntable), but, it makes for quite a novelty, and those are hard to come by these days. I'll be playing it at 45, myself, and enjoying it. (DD)
(self-released)

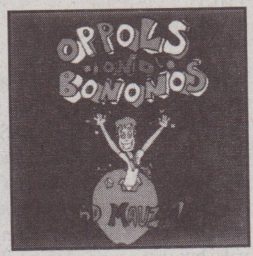
ROMANTIC ROBOTS – "Blues by the Romantic Robots" EP
The first two songs on here were so achingly bad that I had to stop listening. It's surreal in its awkwardness. This review has become one of mild disinterest, as opposed to a treatise on the debilitating or soul-crushing fit of depression the entirety of this could have brought on. Like a really inept RAMONES with awful hardcore vocals; more awkward than it is bad. (P$)
(self-released)

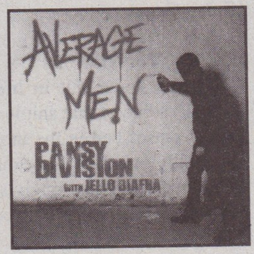
THE ROTTEN – "Enemy of the State" CD
The third album of snotty, generic punk from these Canadians. Not as fast or as good as, say, BREZHNEV, but it's not bad all the same. At times it sounds a bit like an upbeat OI POLLOI. If you want something to listen to while you drink beer and dislike society, you could do a lot worse. (AD)
(Rebel Time)

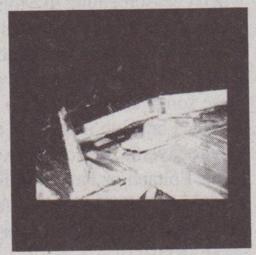
ROTTEN MEYER AND THE PSYCHOPUNKS – CD
The lavish production does little to help this CD cross the threshold from hardly rocking to rocking hard. Technically proficient, crucially deficient, run o' the mill overproduced melodic hardcore. Solid band name. (P$)
(self-released)

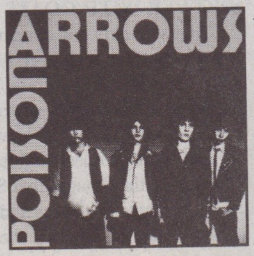
RVIVR – "Life Moves" EP
I've been sitting speechless for a little while now, just trying to figure out how I could possibly do this record justice. Let me just say this EP and this band are totally amazing. These guys are like a modern day AMBITION MISSION—fast, catchy, dark, and super inspiring. I've noticed a lot of people will end up writing songs about themselves, and some will write songs about people they know, and only a precious few will actually write songs about ideas. In cases like with RVIVR, you will leave looking at the world in a different way after you hear them. Every song on this record is that way, and they all fucking rock, too. This is the best new record to come out this month. (FS)
(Rumbletowne)

DIE SCHWARZEN SCHAFE – "Schrei" 12"
I don't know anything about this German band, but they sound great and from the pictures on the insert some of them look pret-









ty old, which makes me curious, so it's time to hit MySpace in search of some answers… Wow! They have a massive discography dating back to 1987 and unfortunately their bio is in German, so that's about all I can tell ya for now. But if you are fans of German punk bands like PUBLIC TOYS, DIE LOKALMATADORE, DIE KASSIERER, or even OXYMORON, then you will most likely wanna check this band out… I know that I'm gonna add DIE SCHARZEN SCHAFE to my list of bands to look for next time I'm shopping for records!! This is a very nicely packaged six-song 12" EP at 45 RPM on green vinyl that sounds great! (ML)
(Campary)

SEDATIVES – "Cannot Calm Down" EP
Aside from a demo, this is the first proper release from Ottawa's SEDATIVES. The first song slowly builds up with the keys in the forefront, and then proceeds to really rock through all five songs. The keys are heavy in the mix and I personally think it's a nice touch. There is more emotion in the guitar than the vocals, but that's a good thing. Hitting the sad chords but hitting 'em hard. A black bar over Debbie Harry's face marks the cover for this limited single. (MU)
(Going Gaga)

SEXY – "Por Vida" LP
There's some shit in life that's mind-wringingly difficult; some of that shit is so daunting that it makes getting out of bed in the morning a chore that seems potentially pointless. For example, trying to put words to how epic and arrestingly spectacular some of these jams are is nearly impossible. There are also moments in life that defy description because words don't really do them justice. Like me futilely attempting to record the sumptuousness that flavored my experience the first time their song "Crows" consecrated my pallet. Shit like that could inadvertently start a religion. I won't go into these guys' inability to shake that sophomore slump. But I will say that this, their freshman outing, may be one of the best pop punk LPs to come out in the last ten years. A sped-up, gritty BANANAS is a good reference point, or just think of that first FUTURE VIRGINS 7." Recommended (probably compulsory). (P$)
(Thrillhouse)

SHOWER WITH GOATS – "Getting Lucky" CD
First off, a disclaimer: I feel like a total asshole when I get something like this to review—a best-of CD from a band I've never heard of. Apparently they were a somewhat well known band out of New Jersey in the mid to late '90s. I probably would have liked some of these songs around the time they came out, but to be honest, I have no interest in this stuff these days. This would have fit in perfectly with almost any release by either Epitaph or Fat ten to fifteen years ago. Any old SHOWER WITH GOATS fans should like this CD, plus it looks like they're working on a new record for 2009. (BD)
(SP)

SHOWER WITH GOATS – "Reflections" CD
That's a pretty bad band name—I'm not sure if they mean to get into a shower with goats, or to pelt someone with goats. Regardless, it's pretty bad, but not as bad as the album cover artwork that features a coloring pencil drawing of a punk rocker looking into a mirror and seeing himself reflected as an old man. I have entertained the thought that SHOWER WITH GOATS might be comic geniuses and I just don't get their idea of ironic humor. Luckily their music is a lot better—upbeat pop punk that sounds like a mix of FIENDZ and FIFTEEN. They're from New Jersey and have been around since 1994; these track were recorded in '08. Hey, weren't FIENDZ from Jersey??? (AD)
(Poor Boy)

SILLA ELÉCTRICA – "Hundir" EP
Bratty, ferocious Spanish punk for delinquents everywhere. The way the male and female vocals collide is just so punk-sounding—total basement-show bedlam. The record has that feel in general—you can almost picture the kids slam dancing whilst it plays. It's so tough, but not in some aggro "hawdcore" style at all; tough like kids who hang out on street corners… Like classic Spanish punk, in short. It sounds like something is happening, just has this excited feel to it. The song "Hundir" makes me feel the same way I did when I first heard GORILLA ANGREB, it's just so killer… This is a great punk 7"; it's aggressive and snotty, yet not macho; totally worthy of spray painting on the back of your leather jacket. (LG)
(Blind Owl)

SINYX – "Britain Is a Mausoleum" CD
Retrospective of UK anarchists whose sole 7" is somewhat collector grail for anarchos. GTA have delivered the goods as always with a spiffy package—in-depth history, the first and only 7" and a bunch of demos. Whilst having a certain charm, it is *sooooo* amateurish and plodding, it's a bit of a tough listen. In the same vein as the early CRASS bands, this sounds like a lot of stuff that appeared on the *Bullshit Detector* comps. I was surprised at the quality of the demos, and the third demo that came later than the EP shows a marked improvement in musicianship, with an almost CRISIS-like tribalism. Historically this is a gem filling in some of the holes in anarcho history; sonically it's a little one-dimensional. (TB)
(Grand Theft Audio)

SIN LOGICA – "The Global Disaster" LP
Perfectly OK bar punk from these Swiss dudes here. There's not much to grab on to in terms of recommending it, but if you like competent semi-anthemic hardcore-ish punk with tasteful soloing, this is definitely your thing. Think a more lethargic GENOCIDE SUPERSTARS or, uh, the local opener on the last CASUALTIES Euro tour or something. I gotta give them credit for having decent political lyrics—if these songs were about drinking or hot rods or something I don't think I'd like it as much. Not bad. (AU)
(Campary)

SLZY PANI – "Poldi" CD
Well, I really have no idea what's going on lyrically here—everything is in some foreign language that I can neither decipher, nor tell what it even is. It appears to be some sort of Slavic language, or maybe something Scandinavian, perhaps? Google hasn't really let me down in the past, but today it's to no avail. For all I know, they could be a homophobic Nazi band, or they could be a totally positive group singing about puppies and other forms of innocence; unless somebody can clear things up here, I guess I'll never know. As far as the music is concerned, it's melodic, not too hardcore, and not too poppy. They sound like any number of mid-'90s Fat Wreck bands, take your pick. (BD)
(Papagajuv Hlasatel)

THE SODS – "Recordings '78-'79" LP
This pre-SORT SOL outfit plays an intoxicating blend of punk/post-punk/no wave. The guitar and bass tones are always great and fuzzed out, sometimes with some phaser action, sometimes sounding like there's some synth in the mix. Some songs have a surf twang, some a gothic macabre drone, some a JOY DIVISION-ish tic, and some dabble in the dub. Most fall into the amazing school of first-wave punk, where I wouldn't have to fucking label (which I fail to do) this as "such and such" in an attempt to make you spend money and consume. Who cares what I think anyway? What do you think? I'm sure you've already downloaded it, but if not give this a whirl because it's an awesome and interesting record. Anyways, this is comprised of THE SODS' *Minutes To Go* LP, songs from *Pære Punk* comp, three unreleased tracks that are great, and two live ones. It's a shame such an essential record gets the shit boot treatment with a pixilated cover and two sides of the original LP crammed onto one. Here's hoping this sees a legit reissue. (RR)
(bootleg)

SONOROUS GALE – "Two's a Crowd" LP
All right, this is pretty darn good. The debut LP from Buffalo, NY's SONOROUS GALE is emotional, technical hardcore in the '90s vein, with some post-rock influences to boot. One of the two dudes in the band was formerly in ROBOT HAS WEREWOLF HAND, which might help point you in the right direction. TORCHE meets MAJORTIY RULE would be the cheapest, easiest way to describe it, but I'm having a hard time coming up with better descriptions. What I'm saying, once again, is that this is pretty darn good, so you might want to check it out. Oh, they have guest vocals by the singer of totally amazing Canucks BALLAST, for those that care about such things. And for the record nerds, the first press of 500 are all on white vinyl. (VX)
(Wrong Foot)

SPOONFUL OF VICODIN – CD
No way! Just when I thought the whole powerviolence/grindcore thing was tapped out, this CD comes along to destroy my speakers and eardrums! Self-described as "rotcore," and even better, "bursts of rage at the speed of hate," the album fucking sells itself. Think DISRUPT meets CROSSED OUT. Listening to this brings out repressed urges to destroy things and embrace the dark side. 27 tracks of over-the-top speed insanity from these New York City potheads fill this compilation, collecting songs from their one 7" EP (something I might have to track down) to comp and demo recordings, and all with great sound quality. My only gripe is the occasional goat vocals that seem obligatory with this genre, which for me brings this down from ten stars to nine. Real cool shit, nonetheless. And these guys are a two-piece!!? Unbelievable. (BG)
(Bones Brigade)

STAN OSKARZENIA – "I Co..." CD
This five-piece out of Poland offers up many different styles of punk on this 20-track CD, from dissonant slower tunes to straight-ahead GBH-style punk to ska-influenced numbers to Eastern Euro hardcore. For me, the start and end of the disc worked best where the numbers were most lively. Standouts were "Samobojcza Walka" and "I Co." No lyric translations so international punk fans take note. Good stuff here. (RK)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

STRAWMEN – "Jack Rabbit" EP
I can't help but see a band named STRAWMEN and automatically think of the early '90s San Francisco band STRAWMAN whom I heard changed their name to STRAWMAN because there was already a band

called STRAWMEN. Since I now have a reputation as the reviewer who likes to complain about bands being uncreative with names, I have to add "Get used to it and start thinking up better names." The music is jangly country-ish garage rock. It's fast-paced and stompy. The cover of the COMPULSIVE GAMBLERS' "Sour & Vicious Man" is nice as well. (CK)
(Foul & Fair)

STRUNG OUT – "Prototypes and Painkillers" LP

I see now that there's a reason that it's 2009, I am 30 years old, and hearing STRUNG OUT for the first time and it's with none other than a collection of rarities and whatnot that I get to share this milestone. The verdict: a soundtrack to a show on SpikeTV where a bunch of *extreme* motocross bozos do shit like hit each other in the nards with dead catfish to an audience of stoned 20-somethings eating nachos in dorms across America. Mmmmm, nachos. (JU)
(Fat Wreck Chords)

STRUNG OUT – "Prototypes and Painkillers" CD

All right kiddies, what you get here is a collection of STRUNG OUT's compilation tracks, demos, and rarities. This mainstay of Fat Wreck Chords has been around for nearly two decades and their sound has continued to develop and shift throughout their career. This collection specifically demonstrates their ever-changing sound by purposely juxtaposing different styled tracks next to one another. It is no better evidenced than at the center of this album where the melodic hardcore of "Season of the Witch" goes into the radio-friendly punk à la ALKALINE TRIO of "Your Worst Mistake" then into the metal-infused punk of "Betrayal" and then back to radio-friendly. Though it sounds like the band might be all over the map, they somehow manage to maintain a thread of continuity throughout. To top it off you even get a non-ironic cover of OZZY OSBOURNE's "Bark at the Moon" on this one. Good stuff. (RK)
(Fat Wreck Chords)

STUPID PARTY – LP

Sludgy noisenik punk of the "we don't give a fuck" school. The sound of suburban kids who have discovered SONIC YOUTH, BIG BLACK, SCRATCH ACID, *The Book of the Subgenius*, and four-track home recording. It's a bit too lo-fi to be as impactful as what I've just described could be, but there's definitely some potential here. (AM)
(Freedom School)

THE STUPIDS – "Feel the Suck" EP

Yup, *that* STUPIDS. I dunno if they're "back together" or if this is a one-off single—perhaps just a break for Tommy Stupid from his successful drum 'n' bass alter-ego KLUTE. Anyway, although *Feel the Suck* reunites Tommy with original STUPID guitarist Marty Tuff, it's more in the melodic hardcore vein of their later material than the blazing thrash of their early days—which is not to say it's bad, 'cause it's actually pretty well executed. Some decent hooks, especially on the B-side, had me noddin' along. I just wish they had included a lyric sheet… Wait a sec—no, I don't. (CS)
(Boss Tunage)

SUPPOSITORIES – "Moments of Square Violence" LP

All right guys, listen up cuz I'm boss around play-hardcore here: *speed up*. You guys would be a pretty goddam great play-hardcore band, except you heard either the WIPERS or EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING (I'm guessing the play-hardcore latter) and decided to slow it down. Don't. Play hardcore. Your band's name is SUPPOSITORIES and you're from Canada. Smoke some of that Montreal meth (you're not from there, but make the trip). *Play hardcore*. I like slow music. But you don't, so quit faking it; play hardcore and do what you're meant to: Play hardcore. (BB)
(Going Gaga)

TANTIVE-IV – CD

Young dudes playing ripping (at times) Epitaph-style punk, yet most of it is just straight aping shitty DECENDENCE/BOUNCING SOULS grossness. Excellent production and sound quality, clean and crisp all the way around. Listen for these guys on the next skate/surf DVD or on a second stage at the Warped Tour. (RM)
(Super Awesome)

TEENAGE LOVE 13 – "No Excuses" CD

When living in Alabama in the '80s, a friend of mine once told me, "Most rednecks are hardcore as hell, they don't like the government or anything, but they see punk rock as something totally lame because of how it's portrayed in the media and don't want anything to do with it." The populist anti-authority values of personal freedom sort of come full circle from very different directions. Most punk-redneck fusions never take that angle though, and are more about lauding being a drunk dumbass, something both cultures often (and probably more frequently) come full circle on as well. This Tennessee band take that route, reminiscent of later MEATMEN records where perfunctory and puerile rock 'n' roll with gnarled vocals is banged out in a loose, punkish fashion to serve song titles like "Life of Booze," "Muffbuster," "Girls Go Crazy." Thing is, I don't even think limp punk rock like this is what rednecks want to listen to at this point—I would think it's more somewhere in between, I dunno, BILLY RAY CYRUS and SLIPKNOT. Punks would leave this would-be bar band to their crowd drinking overpriced cheap booze at their dirty watering hole, grab a 40oz at the nearby liquor store, and seek out whatever warehouse, basement, or cleaned out living room was sprouting the next generation of crazy underground music. *Next!* (KS)
(self-released)

TELEMARK – "Informat" CD

Let me start off by saying that TELEMARK is a great name for a band. *Huts* off for that one, *mein herren*. Telemark the sport is a type of skiing competition that requires proficiency in several different disciplines including slalom, moguls, and jumping. TELEMARK the band demonstrate proficiency in several related styles of punk and indie rock from the last ten or fifteen years. Take the vocal drive, structures, and pacing of HOT SNAKES, propulsive black diamond bass-lines that recall NOMEANSNO, and a SHELLAC-like metallic sheen to the guitars, and you'll come to an approximation of the avalanche of post-punk that awaits any purchaser of this album. Enough ski references? (AM)
(X-Mist)

TIME TO ESCAPE – "Cost of Living" EP

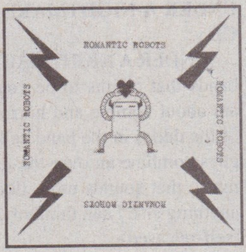
My needle just dropped onto a five-track disc of ripping hardcore mayhem. Great from start to finish. Claustrophobic lyrics, no solutions, and frustration are clearly stated here and compliment the dirty and raw style of playing brought to us by this DC band. Great shit. (MS)
(Grave Mistake)

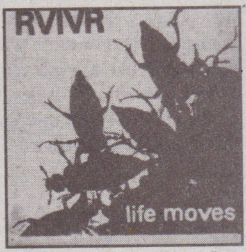
TIMMY ORGANISM – "Squeeze the Giant" EP

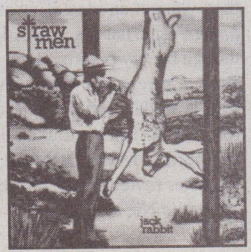
I'll squeeze the giant till he leaks lemon all over my shit-eating mouth. Timmy Vulgar (the balding yet relatively young piece of shit behind these recordings) reels his usual guitar heroics back into the shed, where he's been busy getting probably pretty stoned and making some squid noises on a Yamaha. Fans of CLONE DEFECTS and HUMAN EYE will like this, though most likely not for the same reason they (we) dig those groups. This is definitely a Sacred Bones release, if you catch my cock, and you'll buy it and you'll like it. I paid ten dollars for this fucking thing, man, and it's not even an LP, and I don't even regret it and hell, hell, HELL. (BB)
(Sacred Bones)

TOWER BLOCKS – "The Good, The Bad, and The Punks" LP

Fancy picture disc with one of those drawings like THE EXPLOITED *Troops of Tomorrow* record. Pretty cheesy but I can dig it. These German skunx have been around a while, though this the first full length I've heard. No surprises at all—it's Oi-tinged street punk, not unlike OXYMORON or RUNNIN RIOT. My record collection is filled with shit like this; I don't really need any more, but this is really good, especially if you dig German Oi music. (TB)
(Joe Pogo)







TRIPIS – "Prawda" CD

Fifteen-song album from some Polish punks taking the straight road that heads right through the punk rock tunnel. They certainly have a European bend on their sound, not just because the songs are sung in Polish, but the songwriting has a melodic, rockin' sound to it that keeps an edge but isn't threatening or fierce. Some good sing-alongs peppered throughout matched with some strange guitar decisions. I probably won't listen to this much, but a good and rare showing from Poland! (RM)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

TWIN KILLING – "…If This Could Last Forever" EP

Since this band is named after the FLOORPUNCH LP that has the demo and first 7" on it, you know where TWIN KILLING is coming from—fast hardcore from the "crew" school with baby-punching breakdowns. More on the modern Bridge 9 tip than the OGs (YOUTH OF TODAY, etc.), TWIN KILLING colors wholly within the lines, but this style was never really known for its originality, now, was it? (JU)
(Bad Beat)

UNDER A NIGHTMARE – "Cemetery Getaway" CD

UNDER A NIGHTMARE is one of those gimmick bands that claims to be zombies, and all their songs are about zombie and horror film related topics. One of the dudes in the band calls himself "Coffin." These guys combine an over-the-top MISFITS persona with music that sounds more like THE OFFSPRING than anything else I can think of. (FS)
(self-released)

UZI SUICIDE – "Moshin' 'n' Thrashin'" CD

This is the forever immortalization of recently departed Bay Area thrash band UZI SUICIDE on one discography CD. For those who never got to hear them, they sound like a grind version of SHEER TERROR except with ultra-PC lyrics. If you've already exhausted the entire SPAZZ discography and still need more, this one is for you. (PL)
(RSR)

UZ JSME DOMA – "Fairy Tales from Needland" LP

This is really more of an ensemble than a band, and these songs have way more in common with '80s Polish new wave acts like REPUBLICA and KLAUS MITFFOCH than they do with bands most people think of when thinking of Polish punk. The vocals often remind me of the Czech band FPB (UZ JSME DOMA is ex-FPB) that I raved about last month, but coming up with comparisons beyond that is pretty tough. Combine equal parts SUBMISSION HOLD, melodic Eastern European punk, Bay Area weirdos SLEEPYTIME GORILLA MUSEUM, a score for a live theatre production, and MR. BUNGLE at their artiest (at this point, the reader is either devouring my words with rapt enthusiasm, or has moved on with punken disgust to read the review of the 42nd WIPERS reissue) and then you get an idea of what your friendly reviewer is up against. That it's interesting, there can be no doubt, though beauty is certainly in the eye of the enjoyer, and I'm not sure which camp I fall into yet. The musicianship is stellar, and it's also worth noting that this was recorded in 1995 and was reissued last year along with another UZ JSME DOMA LP (I'm curious to see how the other reviewer handles the task). (WN)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

UZ JSME DOMA – "Rybi Tuk Tran" LP

Jazzy freak-prog rock from Poland that is atmospheric and carnival-like in its melodies. Not my jam, but maybe yours?,(AA)
(Nikt Nic Nie Wie)

VAGINASORE JR – "This Here Peninsula" CD

Country folk-tinged punk rock that would snuggle right into that Gainsville/No Idea sound. It's good for what it is, but I'm finding this genre swamped and uninspiring. I'll stick to the original OGs (and for my money the best), RADON, for my folk-tinged punk. (SD)
(ADD)

THE WHITE WIRES – LP

Great sing-along garage punk from those lovely Canadians, with some added straight-up pop to bring the infectious level right into the red. Imagine if you will, a dirtier SOVIETTES mixed with a hint of THE SHELBY TIGERS with a cheeky touch of THE SULTANS and THE NIGHTMARCHERS. Enough comparisons—I could go on, you know. Anyways, what ya got is nine terrific songs, each one a dancer or a shower-time classic or an instant iPod playlist fave. If you dig your hooks, melody, and some '60s throwback noodling, then I recommend grabbing this little beauty. Oh, and be snappy about it—only 325 pressed. (SD)
(Going Gaga)

THE WIPERS – "Over the Edge" LP

What do you say about a record like this? One of the most perfect US punk records ever; the true sound of alienation and desperation, even down to the claustrophobic guitar sound. I feel like THE WIPERS are almost at RAMONES levels of ubiquity; their songs are so eternal, and for me they were one of the first bands that I heard that instantly resonated. Grandiose statement for sure, but fuck it, the song "So Young" on a mix tape given to me age 13 changed the way I thought about music. It's hard to write about a record like this because it means so much, the tension inherent in the guitar and the desperate lyrics and delivery… I'm sure if you are holding this magazine you know already if you like or don't like the WIPERS. This has been re-mastered by Greg Sage himself, and is on audiophile quality vinyl, whatever that means. If you don't own this on vinyl, now is the time… (When is the truth?) (LG)
(Jackpot)

ZARTAKO – "Sangre por Sangre" CD

Straightforward anthemic street punk from Spain. Sounds similar to BONECRUSHER and a lot of other American street punk with its almost hardcore sound. Sung in Spanish. Pick it up. (PL)
(Redstar)

THE ZERO POINT – "Shameless Self-Promotion" CD

I always feel bad when I don't like something that I have to review cuz I never wanna be that jerk that tears into something, but I'm having a really hard time finding any other option for this CD. I'm especially torn because these guys have paid their dues as a band that started out in 1979 in Denmark and the label (Impact Records from Germany) is legendary and has put out lots of good stuff over the years. Even though I found this to be kinda boring and contrived overall, there are a couple of good songs. My favorite being "I Want More," which is a good, driving rock 'n' roll song and there's also a pretty decent cover of "Chinese Rocks." THE ZERO POINT have a very "English" sound to them, so if you are fan of UK bands from the '80s like ENGLISH DOGS or ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE or maybe even DISCHARGE, then check these guys out. (ML)
(Impact)

V/A – "Come and Take It" EP

Four-way 7" split. The bands are BLOTTO, who do a country kind of thing, CONNIPTION FITS, who do a noise-y number, SASS DRAGONS who do a PIST-like fast punky thing with a sense of humor, and finally PROHIBITION who give us an upbeat Gainesville street-punk kinda song. PROHIBITION wins, but nobody really sticks out here. (AD)
(ADD)

V/A – "Does It Hurt?" LP

Does It Hurt? features seven modern hardcore bands from various countries. SOTATILA from Austria/Finland/Chile plays three tracks of fast 'n' ferocious, pulverizing Finn-style hardcore that ably measures up to their great 7" of last year. UK's DUMBSTRUCK offers four posthumous tracks, all blazingly fast with gruff, pissed vocals. CHARLIE hails from Italy and plays three songs of passionate and energetic fast hardcore reminiscent of the early-'00s thrash era. Chicago's NO SLOGAN plays hook-filled, anthemic hardcore punk, and though their two tracks are slower than most on the comp, it's a welcome change of pace. RUIDOSA INMUNDICIA comes from Austria by way of Chile and they give us four more tracks of their intensely raging Spanish-sung hardcore punk. These tracks further prove that they're one of the best and most underrated straightforward hardcore punk bands going. San Francisco's YELLOW EYES makes their vinyl debut with three offerings of dark, tense, and burly hardcore punk, all of which prove that SF has a great new addition to its hardcore scene. NARSAAK, from Germany/Serbia, wraps things up with two songs of their bleak, ugly, heavy hardcore punk. Decent comps are rare these days, but *Does It Hurt?* is an all-around awesome and dynamic international hardcore punk compilation; no stale throwaways and plenty of punk passion. (CI)
(Thought Crime)

V/A – "Dr. Strange 20th Anniversary Comp" LP

Holy crap! This is a trip down memory lane… Not to date myself, but I remember discovering punk rock around the same time that Dr. Strange started and they always had a great mail-order, so I got a lot of stuff from them in my formative years—looking back at the discography included on the very informative six-page insert that documents the history of the label, I see that I actually still have some of the very first Dr. Strange releases in my own personal collection! Listening to this now is putting a huge smile on my face and the quality of the bands and the recordings here are top-notch. Most of these tracks are as good today as the first time I heard them and they have that timeless quality about them. I had always associated Dr. Strange with releasing American punk bands, specifically from California, but looking at it now, they have a very broad and eclectic catalog. On this 20th anniversary compilation (which is a very cool picture disc) the bands included are: MANSON YOUTH, RHYTHM COLLISION, THE BOLLWEEVILS, THE FREEZE, WHATEVER, THE MARSHES, MAD PARADE, GOVERNMENT ISSUE, THE SKULLS, THREATS, CHIEFS, BLACK MARKET BABY, TEXAS THIEVES, and 999. This line-up speaks volumes!! A *huge* congratulations to Dr. Strange for still going strong 20 years on!! This is a very limited release, so if you're a fan of this label or

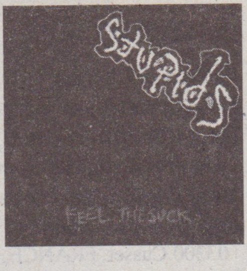
any of the bands listed above, then what the hell are you waiting for? Go to www.drstrangerecords.com right now and buy this (and some other stuff while you're at it!!). (ML)
(Dr. Strange)

V/A – "No T.O." LP
No T.O. is an entirely pointless reenactment of Dangerhouse's *Yes L.A.* comp. STEF AND THE STUDS covers THE BAGS' "We Don't Need The English" and ALLEY CATS' "Too Much Junk"; CAREER SUICIDE takes on THE EYES' "Disneyland"; THE BROWN KNUCKLER offers an interpretation of BLACK RANDY's "Down at the Laundromat"; THE DANGERLOVES take a stab at X's "Los Angeles"; and LEGION 666 does an abysmal version of THE GERMS' "No God." Man, I like some of the bands featured, but this comp is kind of infuriating. I know it was all done in good fun and I'm sure the bands legitimately like the songs they're covering, but most offer no twists on the original and just come across as awkward and forced. I'm not the biggest fan of recording covers in the first place, but I especially detest all-covers comps and *No T.O.* offers nothing to change my opinion. Check it out if you're into novelty records, but everyone else should steer clear. (CI)
(Schizophrenic)

V/A – "Pizza Records Party Pack" EP
This 7" EP has one track each by THE FUNFUNS, HAZARD LIGHTS, THE OSTRICH, and THEE THEMS. THE FUNFUNS start things off with a very catchy, upbeat, lo-fi number with a keyboard that is just plain contagious. The other three are just as catchy and just as lo-fi, but otherwise fairly different. HARDARD LIGHTS' song is a power-pop gem with a twangy guitar. THE OSTRICH track reminds me of DEVO and has a nervous energy about it. THEE THEMS finish things off with an instrumental number that is almost new wave, in a dark kind of way. Thumbs up, all the way around. (KK)
(Pizza)

V/A – "Toronto's Burning" LP
Schizophrenic brings you another comp LP displaying the superb Toronto hardcore scene. This has great new songs by URBAN BLIGHT and THE REPROBATES as well as new undiscovered gems such as MADMEN and SCHOOL JERKS. THE DANGERLOVES tracks are a bit of a detour from the rest of the mostly hardcore comp. Also featured are blistering tracks from BLACK SPOKES, LIVING DARKNESS, U.T.I., RAMMER, and HAZERDOUS WASTE. (PL)
(Schizophrenic)

V/A – "Up from the Grave" CD
Although the title might create expectations of a slop bucket full of *Back from the Grave*-grade strychnine, this comp provides a picture of Northern California '60s bands from podunk burgs such as Clear Lake and Yuba City. As expected from such locales, there's plenty of teen frustration evident, but (as is common with regional comps) there's a lot more chronicled here than crude garage killers. Only a few of the 30 tracks are out-and-out duds though (those with a minimal taste for semi-flowery pop might feel otherwise), and there are enough horror-themed bands and songs to justify the title. Worth having just for the well-mastered version of THE GRAVEYARD FIVE's spookfest "Marble Orchard" (barely listenable in its *Pebbles* appearance), which is proof that you don't have to be a goth to hang out in cemeteries. (DD)
(Frantic)



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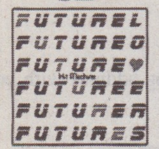

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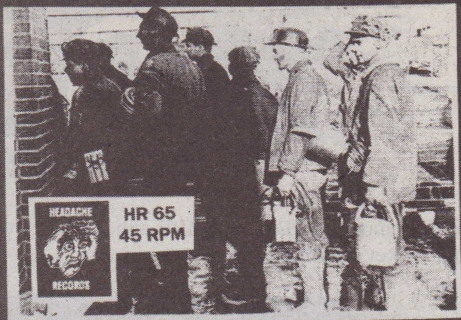

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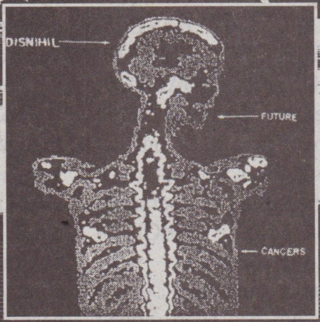

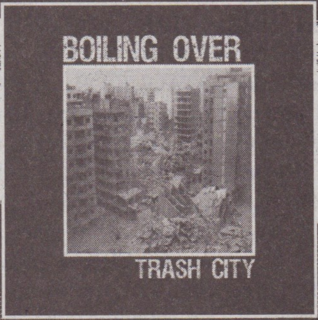

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on Think Fast! Records
Formed in Worcester the summer of 2007 and led by the late Dominic Mallary, LAST LIGHTS was quick to form a buzz with their intense live show and no-frills attitude. *No Past No Present No Future* is their complete discography including an exclusive instrumental track recorded in January 2009.

DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Helen Degenerate, Dan Goetz, Cissie Scurlock, and xYosefx

12XU – This French band channels everything that is morose and desperate into a tight, energetic sound that sounds fairly HOT SNAKES influenced and was especially fitting on the cloudy day that I reviewed this. Perhaps a cheap comparison, but the first couple of songs remind me of the MASSHYSTERI LP I've been listening to a lot lately (though with male vocals), with plenty of slightly gritty harmonies, and some of the riffs are a bit too common, but this doesn't take away from things in this case. (Dan) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, weare12xu.blogspot.com)

BARRIKAD – This tape, entitled *Where There was Fire, We Brought Gasoline*, comes with a copy of Gilles Dauve's crucial essay *Critique of the Situationist International* in lieu of a lyric booklet. That automatically wins points in my book. Rather than a standard cassette case, this release comes in an oversize package with a stark black-and-white collaged cover. The tape itself begins with a recording of a woman reading from Guy Debord's *The Society of the Spectacle*, falling more and more into harsh noise, layers of distorted sound slowly overwhelming the speaker. Side two delves deeper into industrial and power electronics terrain. Harsh industrial noise influenced by the SI and Troploin? Count me in. (xYosefx) (4-track cassette, no lyrics included, nilbymouthrec@gmail.com, www.exoteric-zine.com/nilbymouth)

CORPSE DONOR – This fucking awesome first release from this Milwaukee-based hardcore band is entitled *Open Reduction*. This tape rages with eight tracks of political hardcore and has lots of great sing-a-longs and plenty of thrash parts with a little bit of unfortunate guitar noodling on a couple of songs. Lyrics are anti-racist, anti-capitalist, and pro-skateboard. Worth picking up, I expect great things when they come out with some vinyl. (xYosefx) (8-track cassette, lyrics included, www.myspace.com/xstonedx, time2thrash@yahoo.com)

CÜLO – CÜLO plays some clever Midwest hardcore. Favorite line on the tape: "shitty acid / shitty coke / shitty shrooms what a joke / all my money is going to waste / these fake pills are gonna make me go straight." Least favorite line of the tape: "everything is getting gay / and everything will just get worse." I, like many others, am bored by the gratuitous use of the word gay to describe something that sucks. Why not say "everything is getting piss" or "everything is getting parents" or "everything is getting highschool." It makes more sense and doesn't make you look like the dumbest shithead in the room. (Helen) (6-song cassette, with lyrics, 138 Melrose Ave, South Elgin, IL 60177)

DESPERATE HOURS – It's really hard for me to tell what's going on here; this is a one-track recording, so that isn't too surprising. From what I can discern these Santa Barbara punks play crusty hardcore with some slower parts and vocals that growl and hiss and their yrics are good, if a bit vague. Their name is (I believe) an ANTI-CIMEX reference, which may or may not be a helpful bit of information. Bottom line: if you like lo-fi crust/hardcore, check these folks out. (xYosefx) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, 6668 B Pasado, Goleta, CA 93117, edeninflames@gmail.com)

EL ATAQUE DE LA BASURA RADIOACTIVA – You may recall EL ATAQUE DE LA BASURA RADIOACTIVA from last year's Barcelona-only *Esta Sucia Ciudad* compilation tape. Their track on that was pretty off-the-wall and this CD is not much of a departure. The first song is essentially techno, while the rest have a SUICIDE-meets-SCREAMERS-in-the-wasteland vibe. Some of the synth tracks are truly fucked up sounding, like the synth has been dipped in acid but still manages to emit noise. The vocals are contemptuously spat out over the twisted synth jabs and a relentless drum machine. Unfortunately, the last three tracks were incessantly skipping in my CD player… Judging from songs two through five, EL ATAQUE DE LA BASURA RADIOACTIVA is one the most desperate and deranged electronic punk groups that I've heard in awhile. (Cissie) (8-song CD, lyrics included, www.radiobronka.info/ftb, www.nodo50.org/atacradioactiu)

FOREIGN OBJECTS -Another pleasant surprise from the good ol' *MRR* bin-o'-demos. Hailing from Massachusetts, FOREIGN OBJECTS plays a perfect blend of WIRE influenced post-punk and BIKINI KILL-esque riot grrrl. As much as I hate having to say it, and what it implies about our little scene, it's fucking rad to see a band with multiple women (all but the drummer, in fact) in the hardcore/punk world today. That this is a rarity needing to be pointed out is depressing. Anyway, regardless of genders or bodies, this is a great demo; catchy and enjoyable with well-written lyrics. And it's on a tape, not some crappy disposable CDR. Buy this and you win, don't and you lose. Your choice. (xYosefx) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, foreignobjectsboston@gmail.com)

GROSS URGE – This is absolutely fucking bizarre and possibly only meets review criteria due to its sheer absurdity. The songs that are even marginally cohesive are out-of-tune hardcore, recorded on God knows what, with sick instrument tones. Most of it sounds like the members were barely listening to each other. The rest of the tape is experiments, if you can call them that, with keyboards, drum machines, and a text-to-speech program. (Dan) (6-song cassette, no lyrics included, 11951 Reagan St., Los Alamitoa, CA 90720, joeycallahan@verizon.net)

HANDGLOPS – Super fuzzed out shoegaze with strange atonal adolescent male vocals. HANDGLOPS has a very strong DANIEL JOHNSTON song writing style, but it's hard to keep listening to what was obviously recorded on an iBook. This CD could potentially be tolerable if more care had been taken when mastering the fucking treble. This is much too shrill, my roommate's dog is screaming. (Helen) (12-song CD, no lyrics included, handglops.com)

INTRUDERS – This UK82 style band is the latest offering from Hardcore Survives, the label that brought us the KRIEGSHÖG 7" and DEATHTRIBE tape. Naturally I was expecting this to be awesome, and even though INTRUDERS doesn't offer the smack-in-the-head ferocity of those bands, they still deliver some hits. INTRUDERS plays fun catchy pogo punk in the Japanese tradition of other greats such as THE ADDICTION. These songs are rife with bouncy rhythms, catchy guitar parts, and engaging vocals, and will certainly be stuck in your head for days after listening. Now, good luck tracking it down. (Cissie) (4-

song cassette, lyrics included, c/o Hardcore Survives, kaotik-hero@hotmail.co.jp)

ME4TEZ / PROLOG / VIR' – Three-way split from Russian Federation. The first band, PROLOG, is fucking sick—excellent minimal sludge that is very heavy. They kind of sound like what the *Twin Peaks* composer ANGELO BADALAMENTI would have made if he had been born twenty years later. The second band, ME4TEZ, has simple and repetitive songs with a vague peace punk sound, but mostly plays standard hardcore. The third band, VIR', is ambient and noisy similar to most good black metal—very eerie, lots of waiting. Recorded perfectly. (Helen) (10-song CD, lyrics included, www.myspace.com/prolog211, zoomdoom@mail.ru, virband.ru)

MIG & MIN VEN – Swedish garage/pop punk. I can't really describe this too much more. No lyrics, but I don't think they're breaking too much new ground. My copy is numbered 84/100, so if you want one you might have to act fast. (xYosefx) (11-song cassette, no lyrics included, Rabalder Records, www.myspace.com/migogminven)

NO CAOS – Raw hardcore punk from Barcelona. NO CAOS plays in the classic Spanish hardcore tradition with very little distortion on the guitar and perfectly manic vocals and drumming. Actually, the drumming is pretty sloppy and the drums could be louder in the mix, but these guys aren't about perfection. NO CAOS plays pissed off, spirited hardcore in all of its frenzied, sloppy glory. Pay close attention or you might miss the two-second long sporadic guitar solos, which really take these songs to the next level. (Cissie) (6-song CD, lyrics included, apdo. 34003, 08080, Barcelona, SPAIN, www.masquepalabras.org/nocaos)

NUKKEHAMMER – Burly lo-fi hardcore punk from the Midwest. The vocals are gutterally screamed and spewed coming across like a mixture of GAUZE and BASTARD, but I wouldn't consider NUKKEHAMMER a Jap-clone band. Their songs pull from many different elements, like CRUCIFIX, BOMBANFALL, DEATHREAT, AMEBIX... Man, I usually hate using comparisons, but I keep hearing different parts in these songs that remind me of other bands. I'd even say I hear some AGNOSTIC FRONT, but that might be coincidental. NUKKEHAMMER does a good job of putting together their influences to make a sound of their own. I honestly expect great things from these guys, as they seem to have all the elements to create a genuinely classic record. They're pissed off and tough sounding without being neanderthals, their songs are distinct and well written, and all members seem to be adept at bashing the hardcore punk out of their instruments. I love the low budget production on this, and I'm afraid that a proper recording will temper some of the wildness, but I guess time will tell... Seriously great demo! (CI) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, deathsquadmarch.blogspot.com)

OUTDOORSMEN – The first thing you need to know about this tape is that it's called "Electric PUBE!" The second thing you need to know is that the cover is spray-painted neon pink with an *actual human pubic hair* taped to it. Yup. A real pube. I suppose they're striving for authenticity??? The third thing you need to know is that this is well-played, memorable garage rock with early psych influences. It sounds like it was recorded in their mom's basement, in Detroit, circa 1967. None of this would sound out of place on *Nuggets*, and that is definitely a compliment. Recommended. (xYosefx) (4-song cassette, no lyrics included, $4 ppd. from Wild!American Records, 175 2nd Ave. Apt. 131, Daly City, CA 94014, www.wildamericanrecords.com)

RAT DAMAGE – Seriously depressed dick-rock Sacramento punk that sounds like FLIPPER, sort of, except I think RAT DAMAGE might care more about what people think of them. (Helen) (1-song cassette, lyrics included, 2570 Roslyn Way, Sacramento, CA 95821)

RAT PATROL – Traditional HC that basically fucking rules. Standard cynical Midwest pride with weird solos in unexpected parts of songs. Maybe the only time you'll hear a hardcore vocalist say, "I love everything." He's kidding though, I think. Brutal as they may be, I still feel like they'd probably invite me or you or anyone over to their moms' houses for a hot dish. (Helen) (6-song CD, lyrics included, 138 Melrose Ave, South Elgin, IL 60177)

RAYOS X – First off, anything with a crude drawing of a dancing punk rock roach wearing sunglasses is sure to capture my attention!! And then I played the thing and got knocked on my ass. Sincere and timeless sounding hardcore punk from LA with fierce Spanish vocals—RIP cover included. RAYOS X reminds me of RIP and other Euro punks from the early '80, and if they had existed back then I'm sure they would've recorded for *Welcome to 1984*. Although RAYOS X sounds fairly retro, they do the style justice and retain the energy and rage of the music that inspires them. Plus they have some dark and desperate elements, which generally make any band more interesting. RAYOS X is just one example that some good things are brewing in Los Angeles right now so pay attention. (Cissie) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, dbanthony82@yahoo.com)

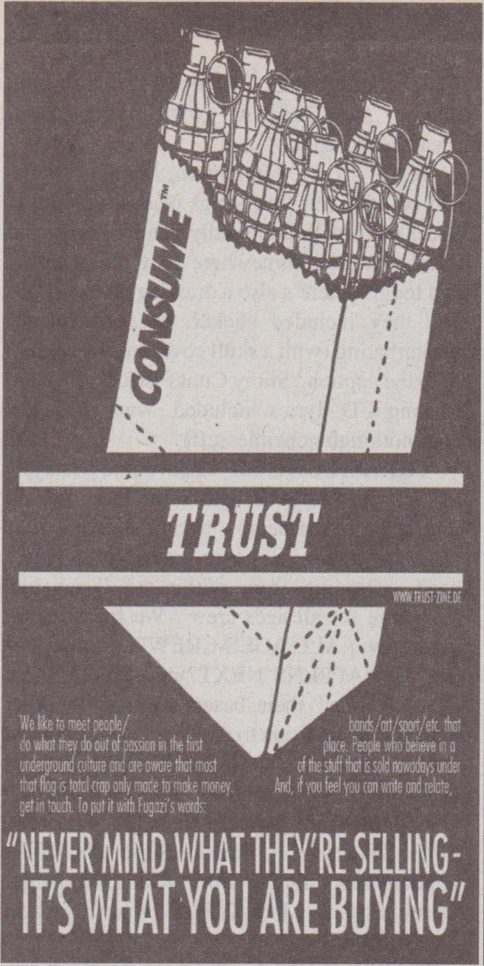
ROYAL HEADACHE – This is some super lo-fi pop punk. It's almost too noisy to really make out. Songs include "Girls," "Don't Want To," and "Summer Nights." (xYosefx) (6-song cassette, no lyrics included, Lawrence Hall, 2 McGowan St., Putney 2112, New South Wales, AUSTRALIA, www.myspace.com/royalheadache)

SCFF – Lord Cuntington, Major Asshole, and co. kick out four songs of slick, plodding street punk with admittedly catchy hooks and vocals that are somewhere between scummy and tough. There's also a drawing on the insert, *and* they included sticker, of a naked girl masturbating (with a skull covering her vagina) with the caption "Slimy Cunt Fistfucks." (Dan) (4-song CD, lyrics included, www.myspace.com/nothingbutenemiesscff)

THRASH OHOOII – Leave it to Malaysia to kick out the jams with some sick fucking thrash. From the demo's title of *Blasting Your Silly Head*, to the cover image of a guy's head exploding from within, to lyrics like "We urge for all ages crew / We force for all ages crew / ALL AGES CREW", to covers of WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? and DS-13, these guys have all their bases covered. Another outstanding addition to the history of Southeast Asian thrash and hardcore. Killer. (xYosefx) (13-song cassette, lyrics included, Thrash Ohooii/786 Thrashard c/o Nish, No. 4, Lorong Selat Selatan 25F, Taman Suria Pendamar, Pandamaran, 42000 Port Klang, Selangor Darul Ehsan, MALAYSIA, www.myspace.com/txohooii)

TOTAL WRECK – I was very pleasantly surprised. Seven songs in nine minutes of virulent, destructive, NEGATIVE APPROACH-worshipping fast hardcore. The vocalist is really great too, you can hear every word distinctly, which is an art I thought was lost to hardcore vocalists since the '80s. Killer lyrics too: "don't take a chance, I'll poison you / crooked smile with teeth rotted through / I'm cancerous, I'm AIDS, I'm death / exhale disease with every breath." I want to see these guys tear shit up live; they better fucking make it out to California. Expect great things from this band. Put down the magazine and go write them a letter or e-mail right now. Go. (xYosefx) (7-song CD, lyrics included, 411 Brandon Ave. #15, Charlottesville, VA 22903, totalsurprise@gmail.com)

THE TRITES – With the first song's catchy two-chord riff, cool wandering bass line, and slightly slower than mid-pace, I thought I was in for a demo of decent garage stuff. Then things soon turned to equally catchy, lo-fi dorky pop punk with a sky-high fun factor and fewer predictable riffs than the average band of this sort. I want more. This is Lucky Charms! Whoops, wrong zine. (Dan) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, PO Box 103, Finksburg, MD 21048, www.myspace.com/thetrites)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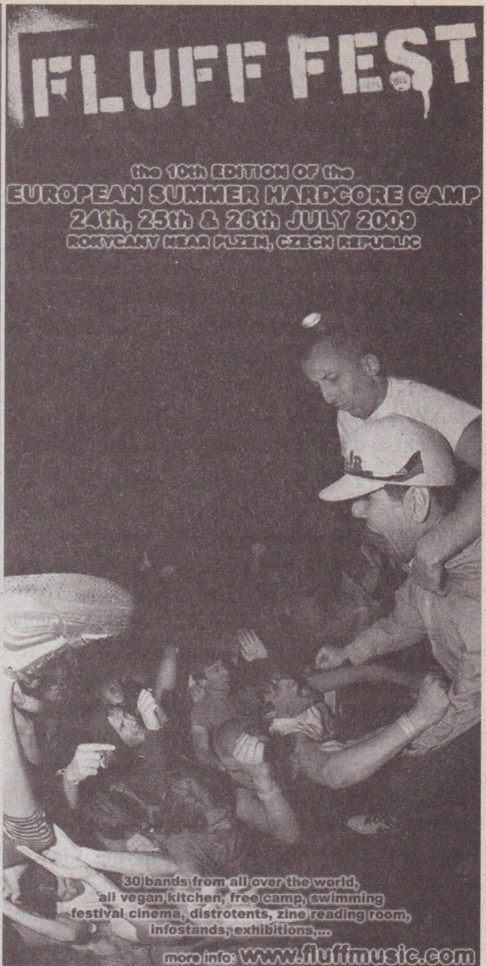
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ZINES

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Reviews by:
(DA) Diane Anastasio
(JD) Judy Balmin
(BB) Brace Belden
(JB) Julia Booze
LG) Layla Gibbon
(DG) Dan Goetz
(BG) Bob Goldie
(MJ) Meredith Jones
(MM) Marissa Magic
(JM) Jeff Mason
(CR) Casey Ress
(CI) Cissie Scurlock
(DS) Dionne Stevens
(VX) XYosefX

ABULIA # 1 / ?1.50
5.75 x 8 – copied – 24 pgs
A noble debut for this Spanish zine out of Valencia that pretty much only covers the national scene, but what an impressive producer of cool bands the country has been lately! The pages have a nice DIY aesthetic of cut-and-paste technique that clearly reveals passion behind the endeavor. The bands Derrota and Mostros are interviewed, as well as Kremon Records, and there are a few pages of cool artwork and record reviews to complete the issue. Nothing totally extraordinary about the content, perhaps, but the ardent spirit put into the expression makes this stand out from many of today's unmoving magazines. (BG)
www.myspace.com/abuliazine
lexton666@hotmail.com

BACK2FRONT #4 / $5.50 US, £2.50 UK, ?4 rest of Europe
8.5 x 11.75 – printed – 52 pgs
BACK2FRONT is an intelligent, well-written anarcho punk zine out of the UK that focuses on current issues and music, as well as giving nods to past legends through brief interviews with the likes of Zounds, Restarts, and Steve Ignorant, among others. The context of these interviews, as well as some of the other writings within the pages, is one that questions the relevancy and future of anarcho punk, particularly in light of the "Feeding of the 5000" reunion gig. Other essays in the issue, especially the one on global warming, are thoughtfully researched and clearly had time put into them. There are also interviews with Noam Chomsky, Anima Mundi, Inner Terrestrails, Penny Rimbaud, and Ian Bone, as well as a few pages of reviews. I really enjoyed reading this, even though I'm not really into most anarcho punk stuff that gets sent to *MRR* these days. Recommended. (BG)
Back2front / Box F / 67 Tannaghmore Rd / Ballynahinch, BT24 8NU, UK
back2front@riseup.net

BIG HANDS #7 / $3
5.5 x 8 – copied – 32 pgs
In this issue, Aaron Lake Smith makes some clever, astute observations about the America that he sees while traveling, touring, and just going home. On the very first page, he talks about how his elementary school brought in speech therapists that taught the children to speak without their southern accents. He called it "a sinister kind of eugenics." I like that. They had that at my elementary school too, and I've never heard anyone talk about it even though it's so creepy and fucked up that a bunch of educators somehow decided that was a great idea and use of resources—as though there's something that will hold you back in life about "Mawwwma! Mawwwma!" Aaron Lake Smith later grumbles about how media of substance is going under, like *Punk Planet*, but how *Vice Magazine* is thriving and it and the internet are ruining hardcore and "all cool things" by making them too accessible to everyone (among other complaints). This bit seemed less thought out than everything else in the issue. Do you really need to tell all these kids that they're lame consumer hipsters if they found a band on the internet? That's what it sounds like. There's got to be a better way to keep zines and record labels alive and relevant than blaming their demise on a suspected growing trend of suckiness in the punk population. That's not good enough. It sounds like grandpa muttering on a porch. Anyways, later, towards the end of the issue, there's some lengthy brooding about death and its impending-ness and also a section about the people he grew up with that were supposed to do great things that totally didn't. He ruminates about passing by a deadly car crash while visiting his hometown. Darkness. This was super well written and engaging, even if I think he's too hater-y sometimes. I have a feeling that someday I'll see this issue published in an attractively bound collection that's for sale all over the internet. (JD)
Aaron L. Smith / 1104 Imperial Rd / Cary, NC 27511
aaronlakesmith@gmail.com

BLURT! #6 / $2 ppd
4.25 x 5.5 – photocopied – 60 pgs
This is a pocket-sized per-zine of stream-of-consciousness ramblings mixed with photocopies of random found bits of writing and drawing. The author mostly types out his meanderings, but sometimes writes them in a barely legible scrawl. I really couldn't get into this—if I want to read someone's self-absorbed personal writing, *Cometbus* has always done it infinitely better than anyone else. (VX)
Lewis Houston / 95 Clara St. / Austin, TX 78702
lewskerdu@gmail.com

CIUTAT PODRIDA #8 / 2 Euro
6 x 8.5 – copied – 42 pgs – Spanish
This well put together Spanish fanzine is packed with interviews of Vice Squad,

Insomnio, Bumbklaat, Psychofagist, Gerogerigegege, Asal to 54, Prap's, and Seqzion Demeiados. There are also a ton of record reviews that make up almost half the zine. And let me just say that my Spanish is pretty much limited to what Peggy Hill does on the TV show *King of the Hill.* I took Spanish all through high school and consistently got Cs, which dragged my GPA down every semester. I wish I could give this a more comprehensive review, because it appears so well researched and laid out. Please don't let this review stop you from ordering—I really don't think this zine will disappoint Spanish speakers. (MJ)
www.myspace.com/ciutatpodrida
ciutatpodrida@gmail.com

D90 #1 and #2 / $1.50 and trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 22 pgs and 15 pgs
D90 is a zine all about mixtapes, which is exciting. I really like this because it manages to put all the musings and rants into letter-form, like "I'm sending you this mixtape with a letter describing all the music on it, and then random talk about other things" complete with "this is the band I was telling you about." I really like the format because mixtapes are this thing that you spend all this time on with a certain person in mind, they're so personal, and then to include personal letters... I feel like I'm going through an old box of other people's things or something. There are also a couple "fuck digital" rants and such, along with some "mixtape ettiquette" blurbs, and then some personal ramblings. The actual playlists are kind of downers for the most part, a lot of goth industrial and/or electro stuff, and "trip hop" (total cringe), but overall I like the concept. (MM)
spurzine@gmail.com

DISTORT #19 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 16 pgs
I've been a fan of *Distort* for a while, and I think this issue is the best one that I've read. There's a definite theme involving conspiracy theories, the idea of 2012, and other intriguing outsider talk. Conspiracy theories and the like have always had some lip service in *Distort,* but it's way more evident this time around. Dialog on this topic is great, because it opens up a lot of interesting ideas that are stewing in people's brains. Daniel also talks a lot about his relationship to and his ideals of hardcore punk, and it's obvious that he cares deeply about this underworld that he exists in. He has a lot to say and his views are unique and deeply thought out. I often hate reading people's intellectualized rants about the hardcore world, but Daniel's opinions are truly his own devising and I appreciate that. This issue contains interviews with Lebenden Toten, Homosexual Tourists, and Napalm Hearts. In addition to these conversations, Daniel dissects his favorite hardcore records of the past year with some severe cultural and historical insights. He also discusses a mixtape that he's made, offers some thoughts on Disclose, and squeezes in a few pages of his trademark informative and opinionated reviews. I really enjoyed reading all of his rants and asides this issue. Maybe I'm gushing a bit too much here, but the writing this time around obliged me to do a lot of thinking, and even when I completely disagree with Daniel's opinions, I totally respect his approach to "cult hardcore punk" writing. (CI)
Daniel Stewart / PO Box 239 / North Carlton/ Vic / 3054 Australia
distortcult.blogspot.com

DOLL #261 / $?
8.5 x 11- printed – 118 pgs – Japanese
Cowabunga. This fine month of *Doll* magazine covers girly girls Civet, the Rezillos, Hard Ons, Cobra, Who Killed Nancy, the Bay Area's own Vöetsek, *MRR* itself, and more. I get a little seasick with all the glossiness and ambiguous pornography, but mostly because I am jealous I can't read it. (JB)
Doll / No. 303 Aota Bldg / 3-1-9, Kita, Kohenji / Suginami-Ku, Tokyo / Japan

THE EAST VILLAGE INKY #40 / $3
5.5 x 8 – copied – 50 pgs
The first half of this issue is about taking part in an Improv Everywhere prank, specifically, the 9th annual pants-free subway ride. And the second half is about being an artist-in-residence at a fancy sleep away summer camp, so her two kids can attend. It's pretty cute to read about trying to wrangle thirteen kids that aren't particularly interested in sewing during Ayun's flag making class. Reading about this lady's punk mama day-to-day existence is entertaining as usual. (JD)
Ayun Halliday / PO Box 22754 / Brooklyn, NY 11202
ayun@ayunhalliday.com

EQUALIZING X DISTORT Vol. 9 # 1 / $?
8.5 x 11 – printed – 24 pgs
I've wanted to follow *Equalizing X Distort* over the years, but have seldom been able to get copies of my own, so I was pretty psyched to get this for review. The zine is a print extension of the Toronto-based punk radio show of the same name, which includes transcribed interviews from the radio show, and this issue brings us a Career Suicide interview that's fairly in-depth and comprises more than half the zine. Other than that, there's a half-interesting recount of a contributor's trip to Japan that mostly consists of show reviews; a member of the late-'70s band Tyranna shares his perspective on alternating between fan and participant over the years, and it's rounded out with some decent reviews and show listings. (DG)
21 Foundry Ave Unit 5 / Toronto, ON M6H4K7 / Canada
equalizingxdistort@cuit.fm

FORMIGA ROJA #2 / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 26 pgs – Spanish
This seems to be a reprinted Spanish zine from 1994 or so, though it's apparent that it's been scanned instead of photocopied. What I can gather is that this zine has an anarchist and straightedge bent. It includes articles on different anarchist and anti-fascist groups and efforts, interviews with the bands 24 Ideas and Frustradiccion, and a short review section that made me smile because of the inclusion of the then-new Sairaat Mielet – *Tippa Tappa* 7". There's also some comics and reprinted flyers, and a few other articles I can't determine the nature of given the language barrier. (DG)
sergipm2008@gmail.com
myspace.com/formigaroha

GREEN ANARCHY #25 / $5
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 82 pgs
These idiot clowns have their heads so fucking far up their asses that I doubt they've gotten out and smelled the reality in a while. This is the opposite of the Cro Mags; this is the opposite of having a good time; this is the opposite of logic. A journal of desire armed? I challenge any of these armed desirists to come to 1316 South Van Ness in San Francisco, ring my doorbell (a truly fantastic capitalistic invention), and ask for Brace Belden. I will come outside, resplendent in

my clothing that I purchased with American money from a store that probably donates money to Rush Limbaugh or something, and I will shove my Imperialist capitalist monarchist leather Cuban-heeled shoe up your loose asshole. Quote me on this: John Zerzan can suck my cock till it fucking bleeds. You aren't going to win, and you're wasting paper and you're wasting your time and you're wasting my time. (BB)
C.A.L. Press / PO Box 3448 / Berkeley 94703
www.greenanarchy.org

GULLIBLE #29 / $1
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 44 pgs
Gullible is a pocket-sized zine with a drawing of Tupac peeing on Dale Earnhadt's grave on the cover. It's a well-written engaging collection of stories, memories, and anecdotes accompanied by a few goofy pictures that kind of remind me of Sam McPheeters' work, for some reason. Usually this sort of writing makes me wanna barf–it tends to be self-indulgent and whimsical, however CT Terry has a sardonic voice that makes his writing compelling. Tales of growing up with in a multi-racial family, in a white Massachusetts suburb, then moving to Virginia; how his parents met, who his parents are. *Gullible* was an engaging read despite the seeming mundane subject matter. (LG)
CT Terry / 4611 N Ashland Ave Apt#2 / Chicago, IL 60640

GUTTERFLOWER #8 / $1.50 or trades
5 x 8.5 – copied—26 pgs
This zine (out of Bakersfield, CA) has its moments. While I'm not partial to the two pieces written about parenting, I did enjoy the interviews and music reviews. There's an interview with Bakersfield's own TMSC, which is pretty funny, but not that entertaining. There's also random stuff like excerpts from a book about the peace symbol and parts of love letters the author found. I think my favorite was an interview with a kid who got punched by his high school district trustee, *on camera*!!! This is not only punk and fucked up, but the dude is a total hero and badass. The record reviews are also pretty great; they're handwritten and seem to promote the zine maker's friend's bands. (MJ)
Gutterflower, c/o Bako Zines / PO Box 30117 / Bakersfield, CA / 93385

INNERVIEW #1 / $?
5.75 x 8.25 – printed – 40 pgs – English/Malay
True to the title, a lot of it is interviews with (mostly Malaysian) kids. Sadly, the bands tend to be on the more accessible end, radio friendly, yuk. A talk with Ian McKaye is reprinted from the internet. Even this isn't so great, though Ian does provide extensive answers to the generic questions. Another guy is a blogger who has outgrown punk. A few pages are taken up by artwork, and there are some essays as well, including a paean to homemakers. Towards the end there is material in Malay. I was disappointed that in the English interviews a few bands are asked about having lyrics in English vs. Malay, and no one wants to go into it. I'm not excited about this at all. (JM)
innerviewteam@gmail.com

JERK STORE / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 52 pgs
Jerk Store is a really well done zine covering music that I don't like. That's how I know it's good. I don't like a single band that's interviewed, but I found all the conversations interesting anyway. Most of the interviews are conducted in-person, and Alex and Terry seem to be very good at carrying on an engaging dialogue, and they obviously love the bands covered. The chat with the dude from Lucero was surprisingly compelling. I've never heard that band, but now I know lots about them 'cos I read all eight pages of this interview. I was shocked to see that the dude's favorite record is the Life's Blood 7". I can't argue with that. Anyway, the other bands featured are Dear Landlord, Party Garbage, the Abortions, Get Bent, and Cold Ones. Things are rounded out with some rants and a bunch of reviews of mostly pop punk records and a tiny bit of hardcore. I have to imagine any fan of the pop punk, or whatever ya wanna call it, scene will really love *Jerk Store*. (CI)
Alex / 14 Spring Gardens Terrace / Cardiff, CF241QX
jerkstorehq@gmail.com

JOURNAL OF ANTI-RACIST ACTION, RESEARCH & EDUCATION #22 / $3
8 x 11 – printed – 8 pgs
This newspaper style publication covers different political issues concerning a variety of issues for minorities and marginalized groups. Examples include articles on abusive relationships, Free Mumia and other political prisoners, and human rights in Puerto Rico. This zine seems to accomplish the need to inform people of problems that are underrepresented in the mass media, and I think this is an educational and worthwhile read. (MJ)
Anti-Racist Action / PO Box 1055 / Culver City, CA 90232
www.antiracistaction.us
www.antiracistaction_la@yahoo.com

KILLING TIME BEFORE THE PARTY / $3
6.5 x 10.25 – printed – 44 pgs
This is an anthology of comics done by people in bands, about the musicians' lifestyle. Some of 'em are pretty funny and clever, and it seems like the editor saved the less-gripping submissions for the rear pages. It's a decent read, but not $3 worth. The editor, Justin Melkmann, has published comics about his band World War IX previous to this, so if you've seen his work you have a sense of some of these. His work here is fine, and I'd be happy to see more of it, along with some other contributors. (JM)
jmelkmann@hotmail.com

MISHAP #26 / $1 + stamp or trade – Free to prisoners
5.5 x 8 – copied – 24 pgs
The first part of *Mishap* has a few short-story-type writings, my favorite focusing on the irony of punks as teachers. The rest of the issue is dedicated to books. The editor launches into pages and pages of reviews of his favorite fiction and non-fiction books. Most are recently released works, like Toni Morrison's *A Mercy* and Jose Saramago's *Death Without Interruptions*. It's obvious that the editor of *Mishap* is a total writing nerd, and I guess it is sort of refreshing to see reviews of typically non-punk artifacts in a zine that comes out of the punk underground. It's pretty interesting and informative. (DA)
PO Box 5841 / Eugene, OR 97405
mishapzine@yahoo.com

MOSH #11 / $5 or trade
5.5 x 8 – copied – 40 pgs – English/Malay
I'm psyched that *Mosh* exists and that Nizang continues to release new issues, as well as new music and other projects from Malaysia on his label, Nervhous Records. This issue is from November 2008, and it covers the local punk scene in and around Kuala Lumpur...but it doesn't just focus on music. Nizang probes

the Malaysian punk population with politically charged questions and he includes artwork and reviews from the DIY underground. He includes tons of short interviews with local and international bands like Yogyakarta, the Liberals, and Love As Arson. What I like most about this zine is Nizang's dedication to printed material and his insistence on its merits in DIY punk scenes that are struggling to survive. *Mosh* is a great zine that attests to the vibrancy of underground punk communities worldwide. (DA)
Nizang / 49 Jalan Rahim Kajai / Taman Tun Dr. Ismail / 60000 Kuala Lumpur / Malaysia
nizangmosh@gmail.com

NANOZINE #3 / $?, trades OK
2 x 3 – copied – 8 pgs – French
It's in French, so I can't read it or tell what it's about. If you can read French, this comes *highly* recommended. *Highly.* This is probably the best zine ever. This is transcendent. I reevaluated what it means to read. I'm now illiterate. (BB)
Taeniasolium / 10 Rue Yves Farge / 38600 Fontaine, France
taenia.solium@no-log.org

THE NOTHING FACTORY / $15
7.25 x 7.25 – copied – 34 pgs
This is the zine adaptation of a visual/performance/musical piece, with the narration and music included on a CD. The group uses highly poetic language and intricate word games using "nothing," "everything," "no one," "everyone," and related words to tell the story of the rise of modern industrial and consumer society, first world abundance, manufactured desire, and emotional hollowness in spite (or because) of it all. The illustrations here are mostly done in a style akin to a more two-dimensional Erik Drooker, with the text written in a wavy, sometimes wandering fashion that makes it cumbersome to follow at times, especially on the foldout pages that use pretty long line lengths. It's clear that a ton of heart and effort went into putting this together, and I think the $15 price tag is justified, as it's worthy of at least a few repeated readings/listenings (the included CD is professionally pressed as opposed to burned), but I think I would've gotten more out of seeing an actual performance. (DG)
Desperate Commodities / PO Box 13392 / Philadelphia, PA 19101
desperatecommodities@gmail.com

NOT VERY NICE #5 / $3 ppd US, $5 ppd world
8.5 x 11 – printed – 28 pgs
I have to disagree with the name; *Not Very Nice* is actually pretty nice. It contains fairly long interviews with UK anarcho old-timers Active Minds and Czech hardcore veterans See You In Hell (as well as excellently reproduced, crisp live photos of both bands), an article on Shitlickers, and a small number of reviews. Maybe I'm biased since I really dig both of the bands interviewed, but I enjoyed *Not Very Nice*, and I'll definitely look out for future issues. Oh, it says inside that only 100 copies were printed, so if you want one don't dawdle. (VX)
Not Very Nice / PO Box 2 / Bloomfield Hills, MI 48303-0002
notverynicefmp.com

PERPETRATION NATION #2 / $1 ppd and trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 28 pgs
Perpetration Nation contains a rant about cops, a lot of personal anecdotes, a couple interviews, and then a badly drawn comic about tour. It's pretty Dayton-centric and hardcore-centric. There are a couple points here and there where it starts to have some interesting ideas presented, but for the most part it's kind of long-winded. And I'm not into the format, it's all either small type or messy handwriting. If *Perpetration Nation* was more focused and edited down, a bit of it might catch my attention, but like this it's not engaging enough to be so long. (MM)
bahabish@hotmail.com

PIGEON BREATH #1 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 12 pgs
This is about a couple punks' scrounging day-to-day existence. Eking out a living with food stamps and drunken midnight raids on the elementary school down the street's community garden. They clearly *don't give a fuck* and hope to *fuck shit up* as much as possible. That's pretty cool. They also go to shows that suck and sometimes manage to score some coitus. There's a middle section that features the brief recounting of instances in which a few different people were injured (bottle falls on someone's head from the roof and they blacked out, brother gets shot in the face with a bb gun, etc.). There is also a tale of injustice in which this group of guys gets kicked out of Oregon Park, where they were living, by cops, for drinking beer and just being themselves. Comes with a poster of a tree/dick-like goat thing with lots of shark teeth and spewing blood. Like I said, pretty cool. (JD)
425 SE Ave. Apt C / Portland, OR 97214
pigeonbreathpigeonbreath@ymail.com

PUNK//PING//PONK #3 / RM4 or US $2, plus postage I assume
5.75 x 8.25 – copied – 40 pgs
I must've done something right to get to review another installment of this crust/HC sickness. Overall, the layout and contents are executed tighter, making for a better-looking zine. The aesthetic is the same as before, with lot of typical-for-the-genre photographs and artwork sprinkled among the interviews and reviews. Southeast Asian bands Hellexist and Hellowar are interviewed. These talks are decent, better than the short responses received from one veteran and two reformed Swedish acts. A two-page spread has short talks with two bands and a kid who does a distro in Singapore, and two of these came out good—again, old Swedish dudes don't have much to say. The reviews are mostly tapes and zines! A Brooklyn scene report also appears. I can't say that *Punk//Ping//Ponk* is the greatest zine, but I really, really like it. It's also an argument for ignoring reformed bands—"most of the crowd want to hear old songs when we play." Pat, please keep this going. (JM)
PO Box 7126 / 40704 Shah Alam / Selangor / Malaysia
punkpingponk@gmail.com

RAZORCAKE #49 / $4
8.5 x 11 – printed – 114 pgs
I always pick *Razorake* up, even if I have a sense that something in it is going to annoy or offend me, and there is always some funny shit and something of value despite my pretenses. They have such a wide range of band and scene coverage, but their general aesthetic is of partying and like, mega goofiness. This issue features Shark Pants, Holly Golightly, Vitamin X, In Defense, and Louis Jacinto, and of course a billion reviews, columns, and glorious advertisements. (JB)
Razorcake / PO Box 42129 / LA, CA 90042

www.razorcake.org

REMAINS OF A CAVEMAN #5 / $3 or £1.50
5.75 x 8 – copied – 36 pgs
Remains of a Caveman is from England, and you can tell. The writer has that dry English wit, and delights in the absurd and the average... Some of the pieces in here were a little too, uh, pedestrian to keep my attention—stuff that you and your group of friends probably doubled over with laughter at, but in print, it lacks something. There's an Australian tour diary with lots of record scum moments featuring the lovable miscreant Clint. *Remains of a Caveman* reads like someone's diary or blog; every detail or random thought is captured, and sometimes that makes for an entertaining read, but here it doesn't quite work. Not to say I hated it or anything, just that sometimes I felt like I was reading something meant only for people that knew the writer already, if that makes sense?? I feel like this could be a better zine if he edited out some of the "well I never!" mumblings, but maybe that's its charm. Hmmm. (LG)
Adam / 18 Brangwyn Drive / Patcham / Brighton / E. Suzzex BN1 8XD UK

ROADKILL Vol. 1 #666 / $3
7 x 7.5 – printed – 26 pgs
This nifty little zine is making a valiant attempt to serve both as a creative outlet for the gals behind it, and also as a monthly info rag for the Kansas City scene. Luckily, the ads and bulletins for upcoming events (like one horrible ad for a DJ event that takes up an entire page) are kept to a minimum and we still get a decent amount of substance. There's a lot of cool stuff packed in the pages, and music is only a small part, comprising of just a couple of pages reviewing a few local shows. And that's good for me 'cause I get bored with zines that cover nothing but music. *Roadkill* has loads of cartoons, ranging from a humorous scribbled safety message by a local bike collective, to some oddball stuff both witty and funny. There are some reflections on childhood while revisiting a few personal 2nd grade artifacts, and a collage of pre-punk photos of (I'm assuming) the ladies who contribute to *Roadkill*. It's rounded out by an article on sprouting garden seeds indoors while awaiting Spring and a massive crossword puzzle. (BG)
Nora Goddard / 3308 Troost Ave / Kansas City, Missouri 64109
noragoddard@yahoo.com

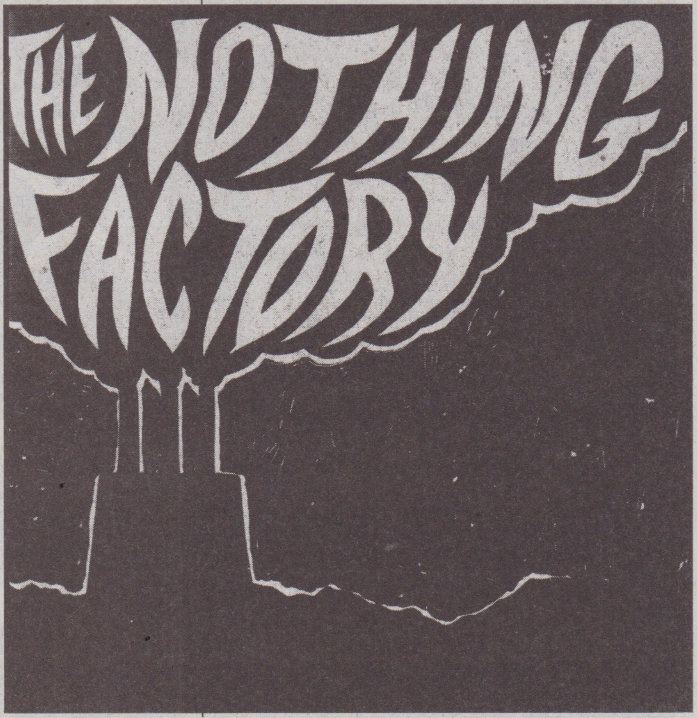
RUNNIN' FEART #16 / $6 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 44 pgs
Runnin' Feart is a punk rock magazine with nothing of merit inside its pages. The band interviews all seem to be done over email and are boring, boring, boring. All of the questions are stock, which makes it seem like this zine is put together under mechanical pretenses rather than a genuine love of the music, not to mention that all the bands covered seem to fall into the punk festival circuit genre. Yuck. *Runnin' Feart* does come with a free CD, but I couldn't bring myself to listen to it. In case you're wondering, the interviews are with Silent Meow, Dirty Pickups, Goldblade, Spam, GBH, and the Few. So if any of that sounds appealing to you and the $6 price tag seems reasonable, go for it, I guess. I'd say that a sandwich sounds like a much better investment for that amount of money. (CI)
Callum Masson / 12 Crusader Crescent / Stewarton / Ayrshire, Scotland KA3 3BL

RUN WITH SCISSORS #2 / $ 2 ppd
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 34 pgs
I haven't seen anything like this for years. *Running With Scissors* totally has the feeling of a diary of a burgeoning writer and artist who can't get anyone to pay attention, mad at almost everything, lost and disconnected. There is a beautiful story of a wasted love, got my blood pumping, and she totally disses him because of his incongruous method of woo-ing. Another highlight is the brief discussion of death—it is only one page of writing, but she fucking nails it. I'm excited to read this because I don't ever see this ultra personal, open-heart surgery writing. It is innocent and unself-conscious, questioning and indignant. The drawings are sort of cute but scary, and it is entirely handwritten (no computers). (JB)
Starla / PO Box 513 / Thessalon, ON, Canada P0R 1L0

SMILE, HON, YOU'RE IN BALTIMORE: INTERSECTIONS / $3 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 56 pgs
Smile, Hon, You're In Baltimore: Intersections is a zine collecting various authors' tales of transit and travel within in Baltimore, Maryland. I don't quite know what to make of this. Contributions are mostly short (very short) stories, mini-essays, and a handful of poems. I feel like I would get a lot more out of this if I lived in Baltimore, of if I'd even ever spent any significant amount of time there, but it's still an enjoyable read. (VX)
Eight-Stone Press / PO Box 11064 / Baltimore, Maryland 21212
www.eightstonepress.com

TRUST #134/01 / 2.50 Euro
8.5 x 11 – printed – 69 pgs – German
In this issue of *Trust*, we've got an exhilarating interview with late-1970s California punk band, the Crowd. It includes nostalgic show flyers from the era plus lyrics sheets. Other than that, this issue has got the usual columns, reviews, and random band photos, plus interviews with Boy Division, Hanson Brothers, and a special segment about touring the USA and the Girls Rock & Girls Rule punk fest in New York in May. The piece about the Crowd is definitely the best part. (DA)
Dolf Hermannstadter / Postfach 11 07 62 / 28087 Bremen / Germany
www.trust-zine.de

WHAT'S THE JAM #4 / $2 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 28 pgs
Aesthetically I really dug this. It's got some weird cardboard cover with felt words and it's all handwritten with lots of doodles. It's also super enthusiastic and positive about everything, which I find grating in a way but also pretty refreshing. That being said, it did feel like kind of an advertisement for hip things in LA, and most of the bands mentioned I'm not really into. *What's The Jam* is mainly one of those reviews of shows/albums/friends with some vegan recipes type deal. Hand numbered, and by the looks of it there's only 75 to be had. (MM)
1626 N. Wilcox Ave. 919 / Hollywood, CA 90028



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Sat., May 9 $7 Nobunny, Ringers, Rocknroll Adventure Kids, Street Eaters, Shotwell

Fri., May 15 $8
Anchor Down (OR), Brickfight(IL), Canadian Rifle (IL), The Dopamines(OH), Emily's Army

Sat., May 16
The Phenomenauts. Atom Age, The Kegels, Dirtyard (MN)

Sun., May 17th 5:00pm $10
45 Grave, Murder Junkies, Plan 9, Scheisse Minelli, New Earth Creeps

Fri., May 22nd
punk prom!

Sat., May 23
Classics Of Love, The New Trust, Dirty Filthy Mugs, Wolves and Thieves, Bum City Saints

Fri., May 29th $8
7 Generations, Anchor (Sweden), Amenity (SoCal), Crushed On You (SoCal), Run With The Hunted (AZ), Lockste

Fri., June 5 $8
Warcry, A.I. (Japan), Against Empire (L.A.), Morpheme

Fri., June 12 $10
Unholy Grave, Phobia, Magrudergrind, Voetsek, In Disgust, Godstomper

Sat., June 13
Warbringer, Zombie Holocaust, Devastator, Prelude To Ruin

Fri., June 19
Resist, Born/Dead, Coaccion (Mexico), Eskapo, La Grita (tour kickoff)

Sat., June 20
Sabertooth Zombie, Downpresser, Crucified, Skin Like Iron, Worship (SoCal)

Sun., June 21 5:00pm
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Fri., June 26
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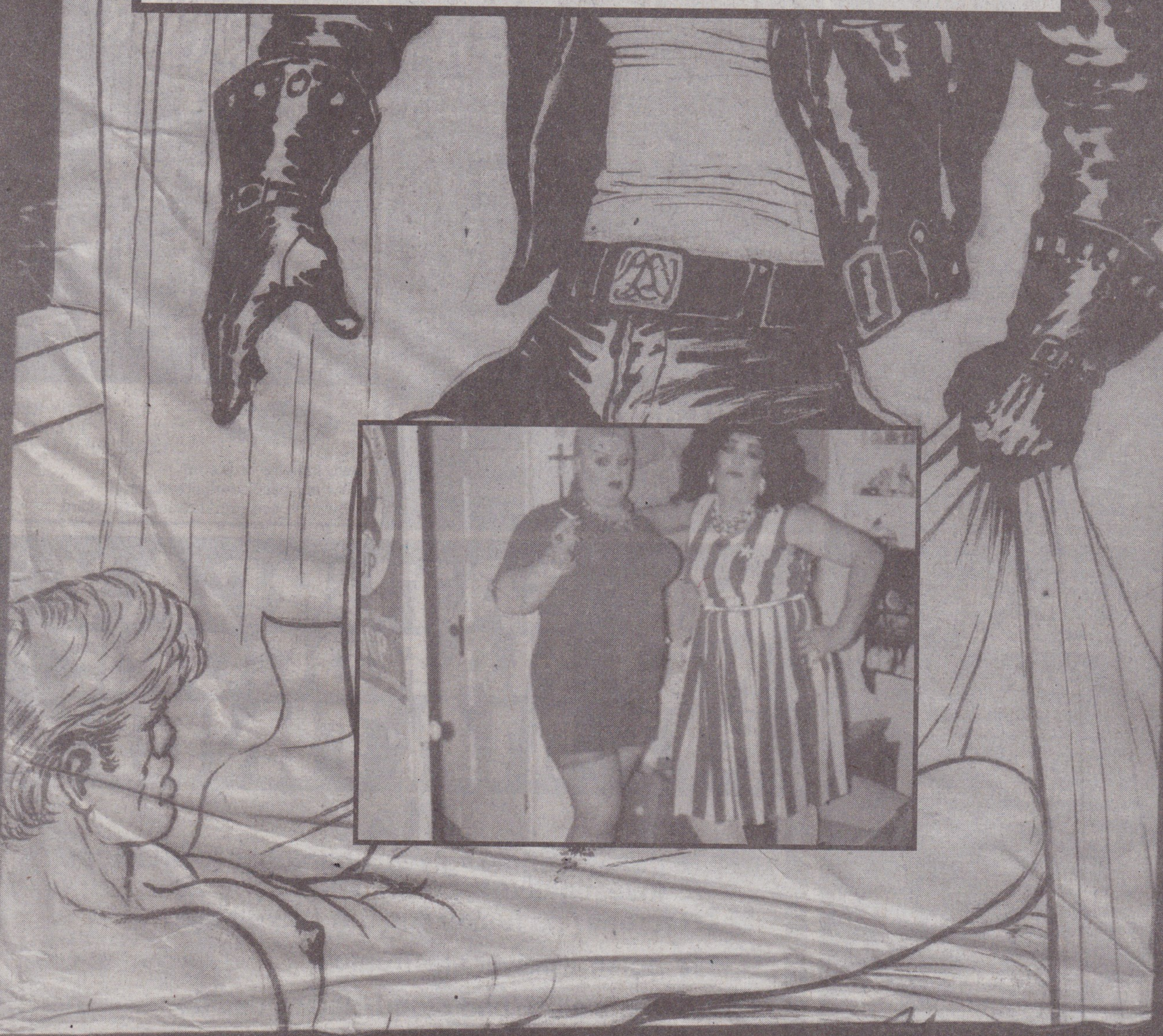

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